

YUCCA VALLEY

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST



INCLUDING PIONEERTOWN
RIMROCK & PIPES CANYON

Yucca Valley



The photograph, above, attests to the rapid development of Yucca Valley in the early sixties. Some of our present landmarks were landmarks then. Bottom center is Homestead Building Supply. Burnt Mountain, upper right is shown prior to the Jimmy Van Heusen Building. The Golf Course, in fact the whole town had very few trees. Country Club Estates, bottom left, and Sky Harbor, upper right were just in the very early stage of development. Indeed, Yucca Valley has grown since this photograph was taken approximately 1960.

Art Miller Photo

YUCCA VALLEY

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST

Loran Perry . .
. . our cover photographer



Loran Perry Photo



Loran E. Perry is Yucca Valley's own "Ansel Adams of Nature Study" with his talented camera seeking out otherwise unobtainable shots of birds and animals that delight his viewers. He was born in Colorado, "raised in the hills" and educated in California. When he was just out of his teens he won an international marathon race by running six miles downhill into Santa Anita Canyon, above Sierra Madre.

Here in the Hi-Desert, he was Volunteer in Park (VIP) of the Joshua Tree National Monument, under Superintendent Parry, in the 1960's. He was assigned to wildlife observation and photography within the monument. He has also done some specialized work for the Wildlife Service and the California Fish and Game Department and some outstanding work with the National Audubon Society.

Congressman Jerry Lewis appointed him to the Bureau of Land Management Advisory Council and he is also a member of the Desert Protective Council.

He has received second and third place awards in the California State Fish and Game Commission's Color Bird Life category.

Now retired, Loran continues to live in Yucca Valley and take many wonderful photographs of our native flora and fauna. ●

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This is the second book on the History and background of Yucca Valley, California. It also contains a great deal of History and Background of Pioneertown, Rimrock and the area known as Pipes Country. This is essentially a volume of memories, both photographic and literal. Many people, in all areas offered their personal photographs so that this areas' History could be properly documented.

This, then, is a book of reflections compiled by the Publisher, Joan Wilson. Reflections of the past, most times, are a strong indication of what the future holds in store for us. If this is true, those who had a hand in giving life to this area have certainly given us a bright future.

The publisher offers thanks to Pat Helm for her beautifully handled prose; to Ruth Duarte for her able assistance and to Neal Vocke for his assistance in composing this volume.

*Will there be a book three??
You bet, working on it now!*

Thanks to Hal Paradis, Bob Stephenson, Richard Johnston and staff for their kind assistance in the production of this volume.



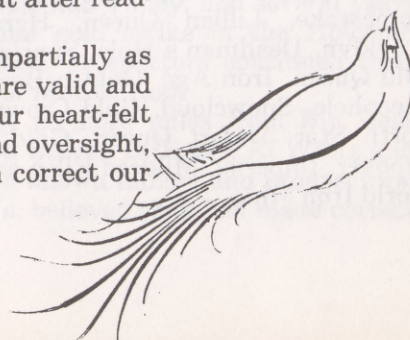
This is the second book of facts and photographs reflecting on the beginning of Yucca Valley, California. It is possible that a more ambitious and encompassing project might have been called an Anthology. However, our beginning was simple and direct; so is this collection. Therefore, we will refer to this work as an unsophisticated but honest effort to show today's citizen of Yucca Valley how we started.

Perhaps as our story unfolds, one might see certain similarities to the Pioneers who came west in covered wagons. The wagons became Model 'T's — the horse was still with us but not necessarily as transportation, electricity ultimately replaced Kerosene and asphalt is, even now, gradually replacing dirt roads. In essence this area's Pioneers probably used many modern conveniences that our forefathers did not have available to them. The one thing unchanged was the spirit of Pioneering that originally developed the west.

When you think about it, our history is a short one; less than a half century, but, what a half century it has been. In the beginning there were no paved roads. A trip to Banning was a big event. There was no electricity even though it was in daily use less than fifty miles away. A cold drink was whatever the air cooler, or the closest pond could produce. Energy and water were real luxuries. The things we take for granted today were a real struggle to acquire and maintain for those hearty souls who pioneered the High Desert. But this was not a group of people "faint of heart" or weak in spirit. Those who came here in the early years were hard working, innovative people who wanted a way of life they couldn't find elsewhere. They had a spirit that gave life and growth to this country in its beginning. It's called Yankee ingenuity.

Much of what we have to present is mundane, but interesting. It represents the undertakings of a special breed who found the Desert to their liking. What they brought to this area is proof of their efforts. We think the people who pioneered this area were special. It is our hope that after reading this volume, you will agree.

We have tried to present all information as impartially as possible. We believe the facts we have gathered are valid and worthwhile. To those who gave help we offer our heart-felt thanks. If for any reason we offend, or commit and oversight, we apologize. Perhaps in a future volume we can correct our errors. ●



Sour Doughs . . . and Soured Dreams



he mountain and desert areas of San Bernardino County have been rich in minerals in the past. Starting with the California Indians, the Spaniards and Mexicans and down through an international assortment of individual miners and prospectors, no to mention the large mining concerns, it seems that there has been and always will be someone working a claim and hoping for the ultimate miracle — the big, big strike!

Gold was discovered in 1860 in Holcomb Valley by William F. Holcomb and Ben Choteau. Also in the mountains near Bear Valley numerous stamp mills, for processing the gold ore, sprang up in the 1870's near the existing mines. The famous Lucky Baldwin was a partner in the operation of a 10-stamp mill there.

The Morongo Basin and nearby areas were truly endowed. At first everyone made enough money to keep going and keep hoping. The fabulous Supply Mine, owned by H.A. Landwehr, was by far the most successful in the Morongo Basin. Its tremendous success engendered a lot of enthusiasm elsewhere. At its payload peak it employed eighty men and produced millions of dollars of gold ore. Far from being played out, when it was sold to United Greenwater Co. it produced another million dollars worth of ore.

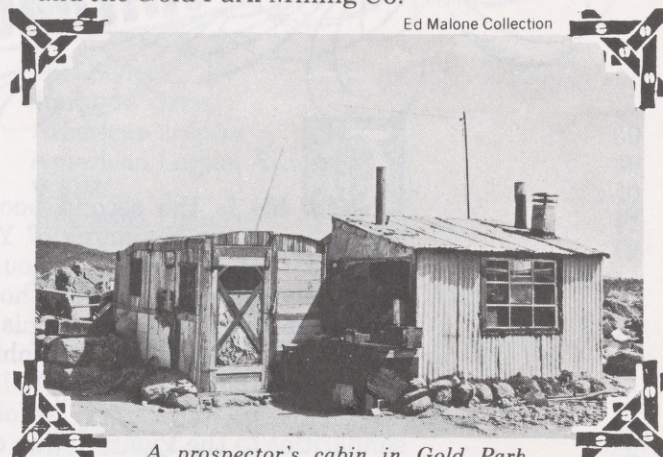
In the 1890's, the Monte Negras District (which stretched from Twentynine Palms to Eagle Mountain) harbored many mines including the Summit, the Venus, the SS, the Ingersoll, Columbus, Republican, Porcupine, Annie Rooney, Schiller, Ethel, Hillerman, Gypsy, the Great Eastern and the Revenue.

In the Twentynine Palms District there was even more mines and claims including the Good Hope, the Last Chance, the Blue Jay, Gowan, Frying Pan, Cora, California, Valentine, Poor Man, Little Giant, Hornet, Little Joker, Quartz Lode, Peru, Shoo Fly, Chumiwava, El Dorado, Drummer Boy, Sunbeam, Miner's Joy, Los Padres, Bonanza and the Pride of the West.

There were also the famous Virginia Dale, the New Dale, Anaconda, the O.K., Ruhrman, Carlisle, Ivanhoe, Gold Coin, Mission, Homestake, Lillian Queen, Hersey, Outlaw, Brooklyn, Deadman's Hole, Sunrise, Iron Chief, Zulu Queen, Iron Age, Golden Bee, Lost Horse, Sheephole, Snowcloud, Gold Crown, Exchequer, North Star, Desert Queen, Gold Park, Hexie, Groover, Imperial, Mildred Ellen and the Copper World Iron Mine.

Among the mines in the west end of the Morongo Basin were the Eagle, the Rattlesnake, the Barker Mine, the Nichols, the Monitor, Lone Star Lode, Scandalosa, Morongo King and the Capital.

The big mining companies operating in the Morongo Basin were the Virginia Dale Mining Co., the Seal of Gold Co., United Greenwater Co. and the Gold Park Mining Co.



A prospector's cabin in Gold Park. October, 1941. The prospector was from Alaska and had spent 21 years at this site.

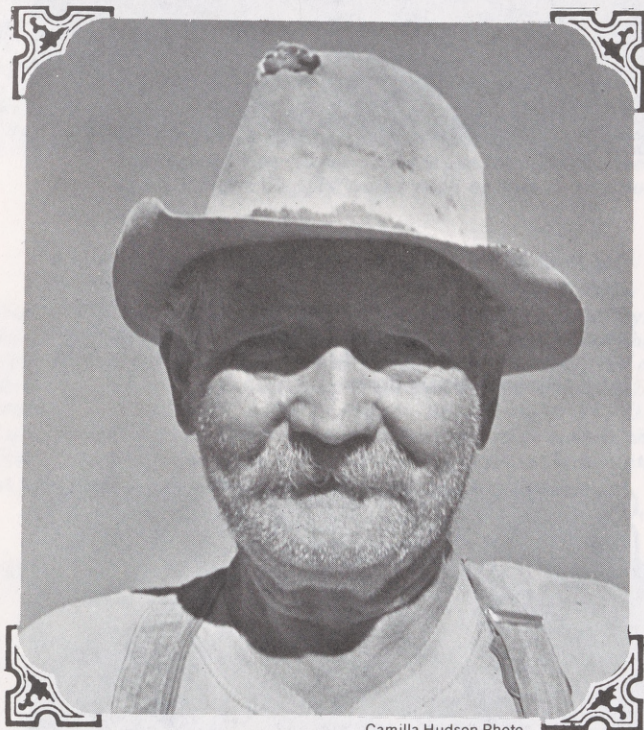
Some of the names of the industrious, ever-hopeful miners who passed to and fro from the 1870's to the 1920's and '30's were David Gowan, M.M. Kincaid, R.E. Blakeley, J.M. Gilman, Sam Joiner, Willard Earl, T.B. Lyon, J.R. Frink, John Dore, R.B. McKinzie, Rev. M. Phelps, Joseph Voshay, Mr. Kelsey, N. Noble, William McDonald, W.W. McCoy, J.M. Edgar, William Leveck, George Moore, James P. Clark, S.P. Waite, Charlie "Quartz" Wilson, S. Wolf, Mickey Thornton, E.H. Levy, Dave Poste, H.H. Patridge, Jack Meek, C.N. Emich and Harry M. Hess.

Still other eager prospectors were G. Lopez, Joseph Littlefield, G.W. Hamilton, D.L. Davis, James Winters, W.S. Manning, John C. King, J.M. Fears, Paul Pfefferle, Ed Holland, John Summers, Johnny Lang, L.M. Wilson, Jeb Ryan, M. Shearer, Alfred G. Tingman, William Smith, F.L. Botsford, Charles Hoff, A. Hoff, Edward Henry Harrison, Joseph Craig, A.R. Rhea, William Margetson, J.J. Arbois, George Berry, John Schlemmer, John Burt, Charles McEvoy, John McGrath, Thomas C. Chandler, "Dutch" Frank Diebold, William Germain, Al McRae, Bill and Jim McHaney, Frank Sabathe, A. James, Joseph Ingersoll, Jim Cheatem, Bill Campbell, Everett Carruthers, Mr. Morgan, W.S. Twogood, C.O. Barker, Tom Akers, George Vier and the indefatigable Bill Keys.

Of course, some of these mines played out and the miners would merely move to another location and start over. But the really sad fact was that, for many of them, the ore had no run out, but water was very hard to obtain in much of the desert, the freightline charges (water and other supplies in, ore out) were very high. Del Irvine was the driver for the freight company. The drivers for the old stage coach line between Banning and the Dale Mines were Frank Sabathe and Charlie Reche.

A great number of the mines were out of business by the 1920's. Other miners held on, but during the Depression of the 1930's when costs went higher and price-fixing was imposed it didn't pay and the mines closed down. There were three known exceptions. Jack Meek stayed on at the Virginia Dale Mine till the mid-30's, then returned to New Dale in 1946 for another go at it. Frank Critzer filed a claim for a mine at Giant Rock and worked it in the 1930's. And, Bill Keys, of course, kept working his Desert Queen Mine.

The two most successful mines nearest to Yucca Valley were the Onyx Mine, in Pipes Canyon; and the Rose Mine, up in the Pioneer Pass.



Camilla Hudson Photo

John Olson, one of "The Swedes" who operated the Onyx Mine for many years.

"The Swedes," a foursome made up of Ben Jutes, John Olson, Carl Nyberg and Pete Lager, filed claims on the onyx deposits at the west end of Pipes Canyon. They had arrived from Mexico in 1918, looking for diamonds. They found the geological formations in the Pipes area that they



Ruth Duarte Photo

Pipes Canyon, 1938. The Swedes, Carl Nyberg, Pete Lager and John Olson, with Kate Harvey, the mine cook, at their house in Pipes Canyon, several miles below the onyx mine. Photo by Ruth Duarte.

were hunting, but discovered onyx instead of diamonds. They stayed to mine their discovery, hauling out the onyx for many years in their 1918 truck.

They built a house in the canyon several miles below their mine. Kate Harvey was hired as the mine cook. Their mine remained active and "The Swedes" were responsible for a surprisingly large local payroll during their peak production years. But, as with others, when the cost of mining and hauling outstripped the price of onyx they regretfully ceased operations.

However, they liked the area so much they stayed on and continued to be the very friendly, helpful neighbors they were noted to be. The years passed and Carl Nyberg was the only survivor of the four partners. He lived on in the canyon property until his death in the 1950's. The ruins of "The Swedes" neat house and once-flourishing garden are visited occasionally and fondly remembered by the Pipes Canyon and Yucca Valley old-timers.

The old Rose Mine, discovered in the early 1880's, was one of the largest producing gold mines in the San Bernardino Mountains. In an earlier story by Austin Drake, entitled "Monument To The Past," the history of the Rose Mine unfolds. It was originally printed in "The Big Bear Grizzly."

"Along the gold-bearing creeks and mountains that stretch eastward and to the south a few degrees from Holcomb Valley, and several years after the original gold strike in the Holcomb country was made, prospectors continued their endless search for Mother Lode.

"Some twenty or more miles from Big Bear Lake Jim Smart, Steven D. Folks, Al Watts and Jess Taylor, well-known miners and prospectors, of the early '80's, believed they had made correct

deductions as to where the 'mother deposit' should be found. They prospected the country which lies east by south of Baldwin Lake and near the slopes of Tip-Top Mountain.

Rich Properties

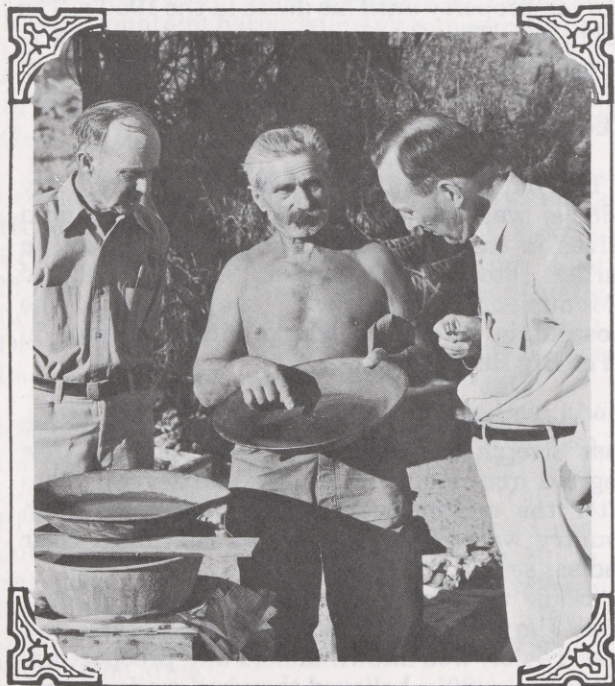
"For miles to the northwest a broad stretch of mountains and deserts showed mineralization. Across the Holcomb Valley discoveries, through the Oro Grande and Victorville district, and on through the Randsburg and Johannesburg fields, past the Inyokern and Trona areas, and into Darwin Wash and Panamint Mountains there were hundreds of promising prospects and some extremely rich properties.

"King Solomon, Yellow Aster, Black Hawk, El Dorado, Apex, Golden Shrine and many, many others indicated the 'pay belt' struck in a general way northwest by southeast. On the south striking in the same general way the mineralization outcropped in paying quantities into the Hexie and Pinto Mountains, where Lost Horse Mine, Virginia Dale Mine, Los Padres and others were working with greater or lesser success.

Taken from Sands

"Placer gold could be found on most of the streams. In places such as Rattlesnake and Arrestre Creeks, much gold had been taken out of the sands and bed rock. But no large strikes had been made in the triangle formed by the Baldwin Mine immediately to the north, Gold Hill a little farther south and the rim of the high peaks which formed the high lands along the southern edge of the desert.

Panning Gold "Desert Style," where water was almost always in short supply.



"Whether or not all this was taken into consideration by the hardy prospectors is not known. But, in any wise, they went far back in the mountains of the vicinity. In those days it was really a long way back, no roads or trails; only wilderness and uncharted spaces.

"How long they prospected and how despairing was the adventure is not recorded, but one day they found their mine. Old Rose they named it, because of the pink to lavender color of the quartz in which the strike was made.



Joan Wilson Photo

Old Rose as the mine was nicknamed is shown here in a state of decay. In its heyday, Rose Mine produced ore ranging from \$40.00 to \$225.00 per ton. It was a rich strike, producing ore for many years. Sights such as are shown above and below, could still be seen in the fifties. The mine is now completely torn down.



Joan Wilson Photo



Desert Team, Starting out from Banning to the mines & Com. Man Siglet in 1908 which you often watched the fairmen. Banning 1908.

Joan Wilson Photo

The supply train, shown above is one that Charlie Reche drove to the high desert, regularly. This particular photo was taken in 1908. Supply trains such as this were driven to our area until the automobile or truck took over in the twenties.

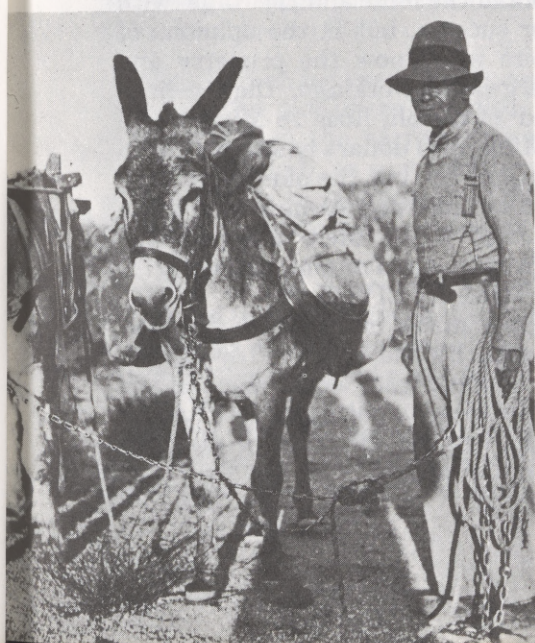
Transportation and supply were major problems in the early days of mining. Below left: An old prospector, Bill Campbell and his Burros at the Gold Coin Mine, in the twenties. Below center: Even as late as 1941, the old "Supply Mine" was hard to reach. Top right: What was left of Dr. Velmey Lewis' transportation at "Old Dale" Mine in 1941 — Bottom right: The O.K. Mine in September, 1941 — Note the inaccessibility of the mine even in the forties. — There is no doubt that much rich ore is still abundant in the mountains around us. Getting it out and to a smelter could still be a problem.

Ed Malone Collection

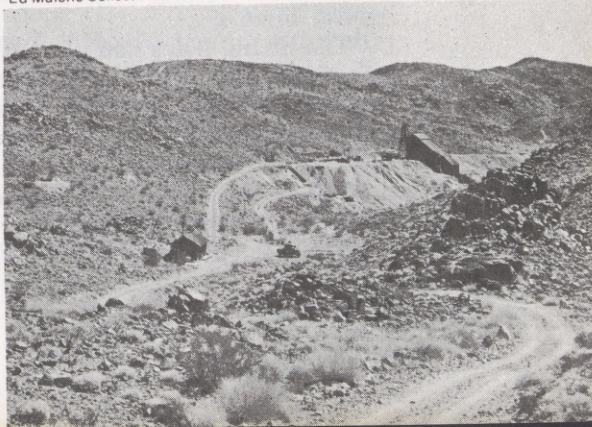


Ed Malone Collection

Ed Malone Collection



Ed Malone Collection





EXPAND THE CLAIM

It was rich, some ore running as high as \$225.00 per ton (old price of gold) and much of it ran above \$40.00 per ton.

"The group worked the property for awhile, and finally the group of claims was purchased by a Riverside mining company. They expanded the operations, constructed a 40 stamp mill and installed a cyanide system the ruins of which are still on the property.

"It was soon noted that the character of the ore was such that it could be freighted out and shipped to Selby (near Sacramento) where the smelter people were glad to have the ore, and smelt it without charge. It contained sufficient copper and lead that it became a premium ore for fluxing.

"Ore having a value in excess of \$40.00 per ton was thus hauled to Victorville where it was loaded on railroad cars.

LONG, ROUGH HAUL

"Although one can drive an automobile over the entire freight route today in a few hours, it was a long two or three day haul for freighters. The rough crooked mountain road, which connected with the Cushenbury Grade and thence went down to Lucerne Valley was probably the roughest portion of the trip.

"Turn-outs were few and far between, and the giant ore wagons with strings of four and six driven by the freighter-pioneer of that day was one of the thrilling and spectacular period of events, which made mining history of the west.

"Stop-overs were made in Lucerne Valley, and regular campsites where the freighters 'hauling-in' for the night were scenes of great importance.

"A Chicago syndicate finally purchased the property from the Riverside operators. Grant, famous manufacturer of billiard and poolroom equipment, headed the Chicago investors, and they made further improvements and development underground.

"The original workings were located at the massive stone ruins, which stand east of the present shaft house. Rich ore bodies were opened in this shaft (or perhaps were more properly called an incline) and all was going well until one fateful day when miners, working in the breast of one of the lower levels, were drilling their regular 'round' of holes.

"The lifting holes had already been drilled; the upper or smashing holes were partly drilled, when suddenly either a forceful stream or a vast underground lake of water was tapped by one of the steel drills. The pressure of the water drove the drill back out of its hole and so strong was the 'push' that the drill landed several feet behind the crew in the drift.

"Water came pouring in through the widening hole so rapidly that miners had to run for their lives. It took three successive attempts at bulkheading the break before the water was finally closed off.

"Some work followed this misfortune, but eventually fear that the body of water might again be tapped prompted the starting of another shaft north of the nearly 1,300 foot abandoned workings.



Dorothy Kingston collection

Miners Rock hut built during the Spanish or Mexican era. The door, framed with logs cut at the site, is barely five feet high.

"A new mill with new and modern equipment was erected. This is the ruins that still stands, wobbly though they are, because vandals have taken much of the fine old timbers out of it.

"The new shaft, skillfully timbered and a man-way, constructed at the back of the shaft proper are in excellent condition for most if not all of the 700 foot depth to which the operators sank the new mine, designed to tape ore bodies that lay below.

"Since the days of largest operation, many leasers have worked the mine and the 'tails' with greater or lesser success, but in the opinions of several old-timers who know the property and know the underground workings, they believe that the 'big end' of the old Rose In Mine is still in the ground. Millions of dollars have been taken from it in years gone by, but the old-timers have much to justify their ideas concerning larger and richer deposits still being there awaiting the efforts of modern capital and mining methods.

TOLL IN LIVES

"Like other great mines of the early day, the old Rose has taken its toll of life. Roy Smith, nephew of Fred Poppett from whom much of the information on the mine is gathered, lost his life in the workings when he fell through an open hatch deep below the surface.

"At another time, when an over-ambitious foreman tried to speed up the loading of timber at the collar of the shaft, a stick of heavy lumber 'got away' and went headlong down the vertical shaft and took the life of another miner working at a level landing hundreds of feet beneath the shaft house.

"At another time, when other miners had staked claims in the district and when claims were very personal possessions of the prospector (who willingly protected his rights with his life if need be) one Billy McGee, zealously protecting his rights, resulted in tragedy.

"McGee, whose reputation for honesty was likewise known as a 'hard man,' thought that a Dr. Kuntz who lived in one of the camps in Holcomb Valley was infringing on his (McGee's) property lines.

"As the story is related by several old-timers, McGee warned the doctor that any more attempts at working on the claim would result in trouble; some say that McGee told the doctor outright that he'd be a dead man if he ever came back to the property.

"The doctor evidently did not take too seriously McGee's warning, since he jokingly retold the threat to other miners in Holcomb Valley about the argument.

"The story tells about the doctor loading up lumber at one of the sawmills in Holcomb one morning, taking with him a young German lad to help, and starting for the claim in dispute up near the old Rose property, with the intention of building a shack to live in while working the property.

"He pulled up to the claim as he had planned; McGee met him and once again warned the doctor. They started throwing off lumber, and McGee returned to his cabin for his gun.

"Yet the doctor thought perhaps the 'hard man' was only bluffing; he was wrong, the trigger pulled, a flash of fire and the doctor lay dead, sprawled on the ground he was accused of 'jumping.' McGee went back to his cabin; another shot rang through the clear mountain air; McGee had taken his own life.

"The German lad ran in panic, and the team, as many of the old-timers testified, turned themselves about in the narrow canyon and headed back to Holcomb, as run-away-teams do with all their speed, never stopping until they pulled up at the doctor's cabin, with empty box and driverless seat.

"Many of the old cabins and store buildings still stand in the vicinity of the property, and it is hoped that further vandalism will not destroy these old landmarks of a day which can never live again.

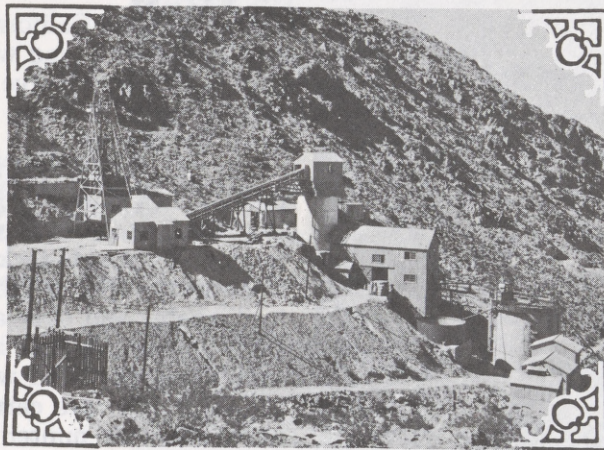
"On the walls of some of the cabins copies of old newspapers used as wall-covering, date back more than fifty years (now more than seventy

years). In old fashioned pica type they record the news of Los Angeles, Denver, and other places. A great deal of it is mining news, and on one page is told eye-witnesses stories of the great fire of Cripple Creek, Colorado . . .

TRAGEDY, ROMANCE, OPPORTUNITY

"And so were the days now gone, with their tragedy, romance and opportunity. And amidst the hardships and difficulty of the times, people were happy, courageous and toiled on to reach their goal. They were hardy folks, never dreaming that within the fiscal century, highways would be table-top smooth across the nation, that prized freight horses would pass from the scheme of affairs and conversation would be flashed across the nation in seconds.

"They never dreamed either that their mining camps and settlements would someday turn to 'ghosts' of the back country' and less, in some cases, where not even an old foundation, over which dance halls and mercantile buildings were lighted by the dim, dark coal-oil lamps remain.



Ed Malone Collection

The new gold Crown Mine, an old Ruhrman Mine, October, 1941.

"But buried deep in ancient crevices of the earth, there may yet be more of the gold and treasure that has ever been removed and one day again maybe Old Rose may blossom forth with riches, under modern operation that will far exceed the wealth she has already produced."

A virtual town had grown up around Rose Mine. The old mill and other buildings were still standing in 1948, but the site was later stripped of everything removable. In 1959 the old shafts were filled up by owner Grant Redden for safety purposes due to the increased traffic and sight-seers that visited Yucca Valley and took the Pioneer Pass Road to Big Bear.

The California State Forestry Department at one time planned to develop a roadside park and campground adjoining the Rose Mine property. This location is the welcome sight-site of the annual lunch-stop for the Pioneer Pass Golf Challenge trek! ●



Photo by Ernie Peters

Above: Stamp Mill on the Bill Keys ranch in the Joshua Tree National Monument in 1949. The mill was used to process ore from the Desert Queen Mine.



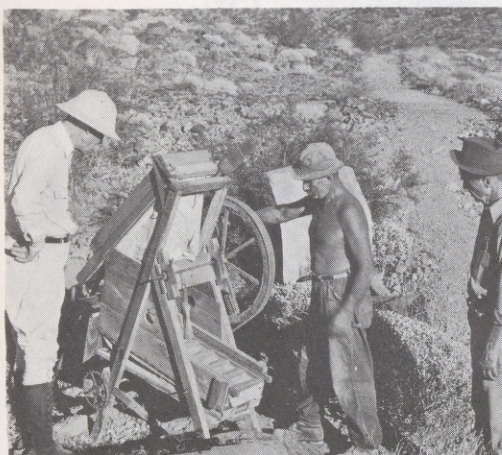
The California Indians, first miners in the high desert, had worked turquoise and gold mines in the Mojave Desert long before the Spaniards made their first expeditions into the great Southwest.

The Spaniards, then the Mexicans, also worked many mines in what is now San Bernardino County. The Cottonwoods was one such old Spanish mine with its rude rock hut roofed with poles cut from nearby timber. The arrastra wheel, four feet in diameter and over a foot thick and cut from solid granite, had a hole worked through the center tightly fitted with a hand-forged square iron shaft. It was carried away by some ambitious souvenir hunter in 1949. Also along the present Pioneer Pass Road are the remains of a rock chimney said to have been built by the Mexicans for smelting silver.

In the 1870's, William McHaney arrived at the Oasis of Mara. Friendly with the Indians there, he is said to have been shown the site of the Desert Queen Mine by Captain Jim Boniface. Bill and Jim McHaney built the adobe houses and barn at their nearby ranch and constructed a reservoir. Both the ranch and the mine later were developed and owned by Bill Keys,

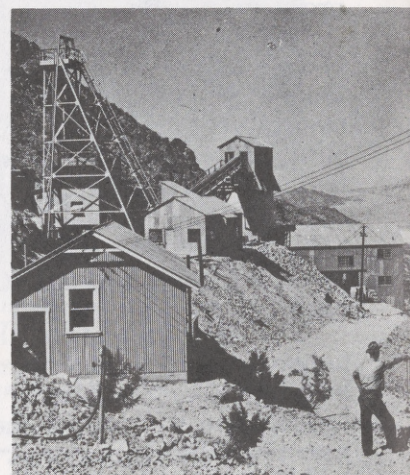
Old Dale, New Dale and Dale the Third were busy communities, each in turn, from the 1880's until about 1916, while the Gold Park Mining Company operated its mines.

Lack of water proved to be the downfall of many of the promising mines in the 29 Palms District. Water was necessary to process the ore and freight rates were high, either for hauling water into the mines or hauling ore out. So, sadly, many of the promising claims remained undeveloped and the owners went on in their eternal search for another strike. ●



*Above: Operating a dry wash rocker
Below: Lost Horse Mine shaft in the Joshua Tree Monument, the site of Johnny Lang's one luck strike.*

Photo by Raymond LaMarca



Ed Malone Collection



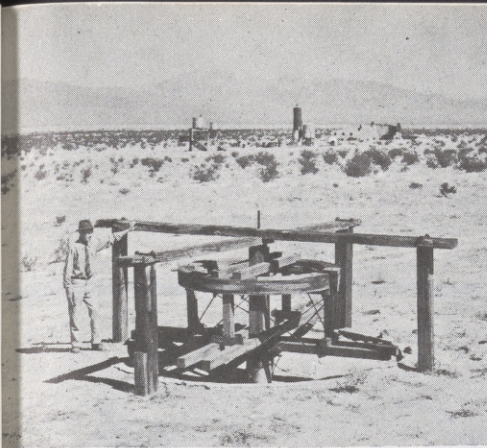
Ed Malone Collection

*Top: New Gold Crown Mine — 1941
Center: The Spartan Mining Camp
Anaconda Mine — 1941*

Bottom: Johnny Lang's grave can be seen on the road to Keys View in the Joshua Tree National Monument.

Lorena Humphreyville Photo



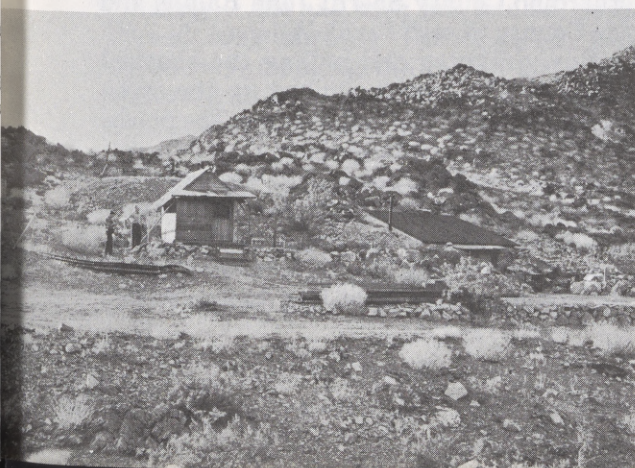
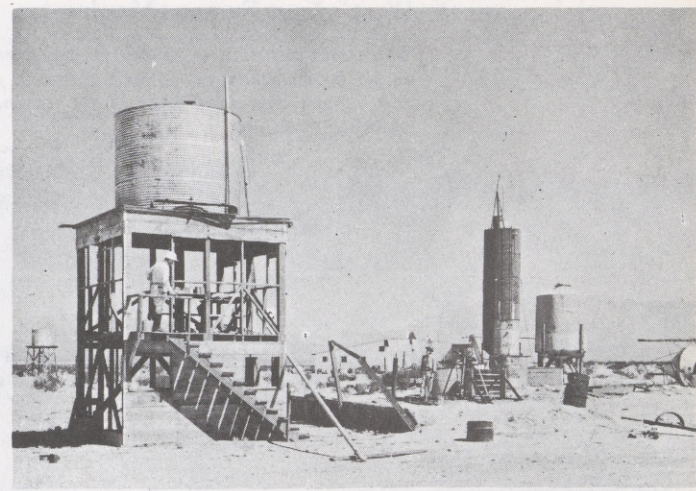


The Mines

Ed Malone Collection



Top Left: An abandoned arrastra at Old Dale — 1941. Top Right: Virginia Dale Mine in 1941
 Top Center: Part of the smelter at Old Dale in 1941. Most of the equipment shown has been taken by vandals.
 Above Right: Workers cabin at Desert Queen Mine, 1941. Below Left: The Mill at Old Dale, 1941.
 Bottom Left: Mr. Briests Mining Camp at the foot of Eagle Mine, 1941. Above Left: Jack Meeks Mining Camp, September, 1941.
 Below Right: Another view of the Smelter at Old Dale, 1941.
 Bottom Right: The Golden Bee Mine in the early Forties. Inaccessibility and desolation seem to be the common denominators of all mines in the High Desert.



Willie Boy Story



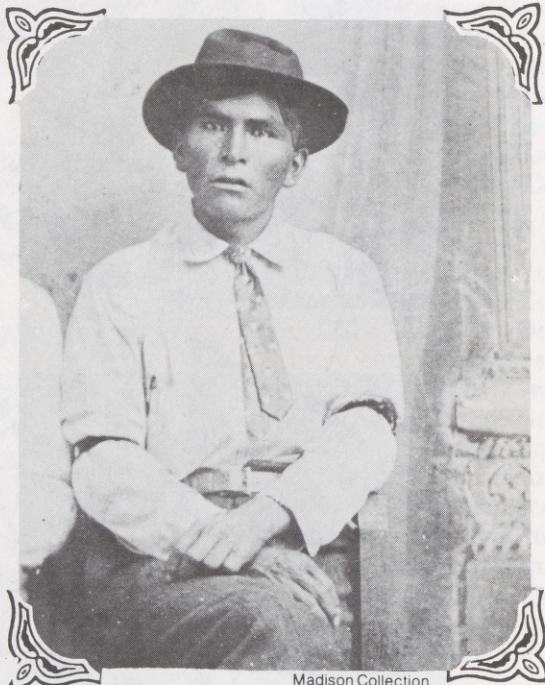
hrough the years there have been many versions of the "Willie Boy" story printed in numerous publications. Most recently, a motion picture romanticized the tale of the outlaw Southern Paiute Indian who came to the San Bernardino Mountains and surrounding desert areas from Nevada.

Two of the most authentic accounts, of what actually was a sensational and shocking crime at the time, have been told by Harry Lawton, a Riverside author and lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of California, Riverside, for the past ten years; and Maude A. Fox, of Joshua Tree, California.

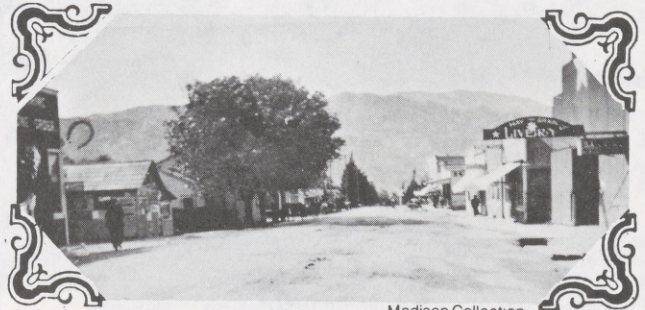
Lawton, after extensive research through the National Archives and all other official sources, wrote the book, "Willie Boy," which was sold for the movie, "Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here."

Mrs. Fox, a friend of San Bernardino County Deputy Sheriff Charlie Reche and his family, had heard the story from the "horse's mouth," so to speak, as Charlie relived what had to be the most grueling experience of his life — an adventure that became known throughout the United States as the West's Last Famous Manhunt.

Madison Collection — 10. Willie Boy, dressed in his best clothes, poses for a Banning photographer a few days prior to his slaying of old Mike Boniface.



Madison Collection



Madison Collection

Madison Collection — 9. Banning, October 12, 1909, looking south on San Geronimo Ave. Randolph W. Madison, reporter for the Los Angeles Record, took the picture before leaving with the last posse.

Mrs. Fox wrote an article on the subject in 1946, when Charlie was seventy-five and living in retirement on his Reche's Well ranch north of Yucca Valley. It was printed in the Desert Spotlight, one of Yucca Valley's earliest publications.

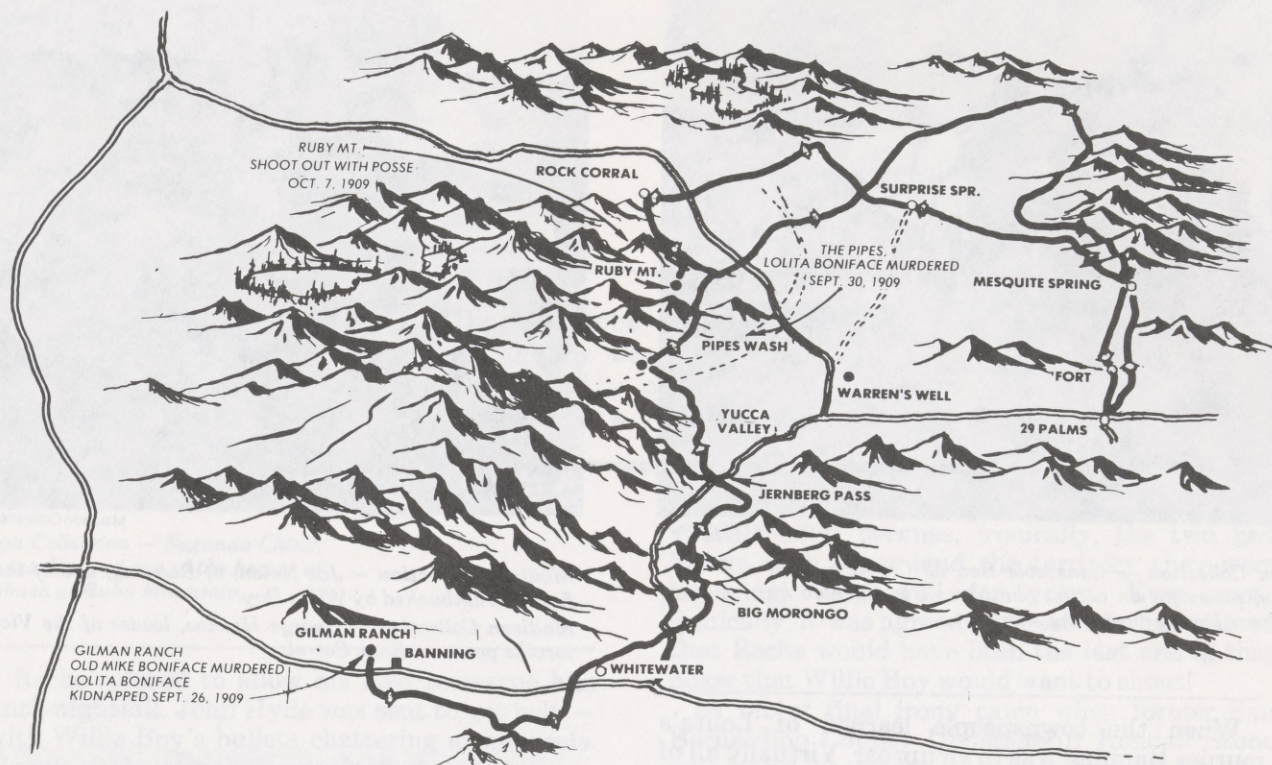
On the night of September 26, 1909, a drunken young Paiute Indian named Willie Boy stole into the Gilman Ranch, in Banning, California, and shot and killed Mike Boniface, a Chemehuevi Indian, in his sleep. He reportedly stole the gun to commit the murder. He then threatened and terrorized Boniface's wife and kidnapped his daughter, Lolita.

The year before Willie Boy had kidnapped the young Indian girl away from her father's camp at the Oasis in Twentynine Palms. He fled with her to Fortynine Palms Canyon where her infuriated father tracked them down and rescued his frightened daughter. At that time Boniface let Willie Boy know of his anger and he was given warning "to keep away from her as the consequences would be severe if he ever molested her again." It was said that the Paiute had been brooding since then, and, so, while "liquored up," had shot Boniface.

The elder Indian was well-liked in the two-county area and a posse was quickly formed by San Bernardino County Sheriff John Ralphs and Riverside County Sheriff Frank Wilson.

Willie Boy, dragging and pulling the shocked and terrified Lolita along, climbed up the steep and perilous slopes of Mt. San Jacinto. The posse, on horseback, started trailing them.

When a number of the posse members began to tire and drop out, Sheriff Ralphs ordered a return to Banning for fresh horses and supplies — and more men. He declared, "There were some posse members who joined the hunt as a lark — a final



Map showing the approximate course that was followed by Willie Boy in the 1909 man hunt. The map shown is not intended to be an accurate description of the Willie Boy saga. It can be used to follow the man hunt from its start to its tragic conclusion.

chance for western glory. This is no vacation. I want men who don't have to tighten their belts to keep their hearts out of their throats."

He found them in Deputy Sheriff Charlie Reche, Ben and Waldemar de Crevecouer, Joe Toutain, Willie Pablo, Joe Nolan, Segundo Chino and John Hyde. Many of these men were among the most excellent trackers in the west.

Willie Boy, well aware of his followers, climbed back down the San Jacinto mountainside, ran swiftly across the desert floor to Whitewater, on up Little Morongo Canyon into the hills above Morongo Valley and on into Pipes Canyon, carefully avoiding all ranches.

Tragically, it was here in Pipes Canyon that the utterly exhausted Lolita collapsed and could go no further. Cut, bruised, clothes torn, feet bleeding — she had been run, hauled, pushed and shoved long enough. The angered, frustrated Willie Boy, realizing the Indian girl who he had professed to love could no longer keep up with him, made an unhesitating decision. He shot her through the heart!

As the posse rounded a rock formation in the canyon, Reche saw Lolita lying face down on a flat-topped boulder. He picked up the still-warm body of the young girl and, carrying her on his horse, had the posse return to Banning.



Madison Collection

Madison Collection — Members of Ben de Crevecouer's posse scout along the wagon road in Yucca Valley for signs of Willie Boy.



Madison Collection

Madison Collection — Constable Ben de Crevecouer, of Banning, poses for an action photograph somewhere on the Mohave Desert during the manhunt.

When the townspeople learned of Lolita's murder Banning was in an uproar. Virtually all of the large metropolitan newspapers in the state gave front-page coverage to the two cold-blooded murders and the resultant manhunt.

The posse followed Willie Boy's tracks to Twentynine Palms. The renegade Paiute had hidden a cache of ammunition there. When Reche and his men arrived, however, they were told that an old Indian squaw had thrown the ammunition into a nearby spring and he, of course, was unable to locate his cache.

At this point Willie Boy resorted to truly superhuman efforts to escape. As he headed west toward Surprise Springs, he literally staged a ten-mile marathon by running in leaping "steps." They measured the distance of his leaps — seven feet! Despite the desert heat he kept ahead of the posse on horseback!

Near the dry lake beds between present day Twentynine Palms and Joshua Tree they found the burned remains of a lizard which Willie Boy had attempted to eat. They continued to track his trail and about twenty miles to the northwest they found where he had stopped at a spring up in the hills. He had drunk some of the green, mossy water and that, together with the lizard, had proved to be too much. They saw where he had vomited along the trail and that he was now dragging his rifle on the ground behind him. There was other evidence that his phenomenal strength was giving out. Altogether, in less than four and half hours he had covered a great deal of rough territory; leaping across the sandy stretches and running and climbing all the rest of the way. His pace was slowing and his steps were not as far apart as they had been.



Madison Collection

Madison Collection — Joe Nolan, of Banning, one of the five men ambushed by Willie Boy.

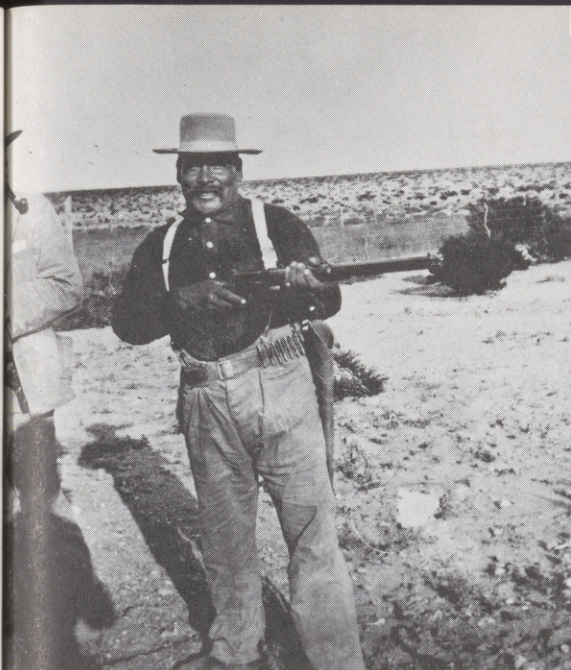
Madison Collection — George Hewins, leader of the Victorville posse, at Rock Corral.



Madison Collection

The posse and the horses were tired and thirsty, too. They spent the night at Old Woman Springs. The next day, October 7, they picked up Willie Boy's trail once more. He was headed back toward Pipes Canyon.

As the deputy sheriff and his posse entered the point of a canyon beside Ruby Mountain (northwest of Landers) gunshots rang out at a fast clip and Reche fell wounded in the left hip. Four of the horses lay dead, shot out from under their riders. Willie Boy was above them, hiding in the rugged boulders. He was using smokeless power in his bullets and the posse could not spot his location.



Madison Collection

Madison Collection — Segundo Chino, Indian tracker and one of the heroes of the ambush at Ruby Mountain.

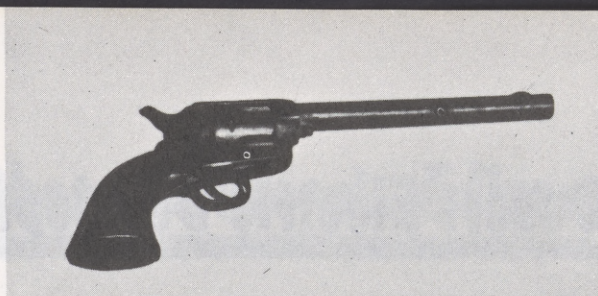
Reche refused to allow his men to rescue him until nightfall. John Hyde was sent to get help — with Willie Boy's bullets chattering at his heels. He ran all the way to Warren's Well.

All day Reche lay in agony in the soul-searing sun. He was determined to stay and he wanted to get Willie Boy before any more tragedies occurred. Later in the afternoon one of his men braved the risk and was able to pull him into the shade of a nearby tree growing on the canyon floor. The exhausted Indian was probably asleep.

When darkness came the posse found one of the surviving horses, put Reche across the saddle and started to leave for Warren's Well in Yucca Valley. One last shot breached the stillness. Was he shooting at the posse? Reche, in a weakened whisper, said, "Willie Boy just shot himself."

Madison Collection — 5. Site of Willie Boy's last stand, 1909, left to right, George Hewins points rifle at Willie Boy's body; next five men unidentified; Ben and Wal de Crevecouer, Charles Colby, Joe Nolan and Sheriff Frank Wilson.

Madison Collection



V. Humphreyville Photo

Charlie Reche's gun, used on the Willie Boy Posse.

Thank you Harry Lawton

Photographs from Willie Boy: A Desert Manhunt by Harry Lawton. Courtesy of Special Collections, University of California Library, Riverside, California. Copyright 1960 by Harry Lawton.

Reche felt he knew the workings of the Indian youth's mind because, ironically, the two had known each other (and the territory they were traveling) very well for years. Even more ironically, it was agreed by those who understood that Reche would have been the last one in that posse that Willie Boy would want to shoot!

(A bit of final irony came when former San Bernardino County Undersheriff Kendall Stone was being interviewed for other material in this publication. He remarked that "marriage by kidnapping" was common among the Paiutes and that Willie Boy probably felt that Lolita was now his property and he would not allow the posse to take her away from him.

(Stone, whose family owned the fantastic IS Ranch, and who grew up in these same mountains and deserts so familiar to Willie Boy, made an interesting observation when he said that, in his opinion, it would have been better for everyone in the long run if the (white men's) law had bowed to the red men's law and customs and allowed tribal justice to handle Willie Boy and his crimes.)

Reche was taken first to Warren's Well and then to a hospital in San Bernardino where he stayed for many months. Critically wounded and in the days before antibiotics, his recovery was not assured. But, happily for himself and his family, he did recover. As he told Mrs. Fox, "I guess it was the handcuffs hanging at my hip that saved my life."

When the posse returned to Ruby Mountain days later they found Willie Boy's body — shot through the chest. He had saved his last bullet for himself rather than surrender.

His shoes were removed and later displayed in a store window.

Hyde, Chino, Pablo, Toutain and the other Indians asked if they might be allowed to cremate the remains and bury the ashes where he died — an old Paiute custom. They were given permission to do so. Thus ended the bloody trail and the life of Willie Boy but the legend is to live on as permanently as the surrounding boulders by his gravesite. ●

Desert Electric Development. . .



With the end of World War II new people were attracted to the budding town. And, while old and new residents alike were most assuredly civilized, there was still a frontier flavor to life here. One of the first signs that technical civilization had arrived was in 1948, when the California Electric Power Company brought electricity to Yucca Valley. The California Water and Telephone Company beat Cal Electric by a year, installing its initial service in 1947.

At the same time that Cal Electric was pioneering, developing and growing with Yucca Valley, the Desert Electric Co-operative was serving Rimrock, Gamma Gulch, Landers and the sections east of Twentynine Palms now known as Wonder Valley.

Cal Electric, through the good graces of its local representative, Chet Lemke, was a popular company. Chet always friendly and most accommodating, more than met the people halfway. He was usually stopped in the street by the prospective customer and went with him immediately to his home or business and his property was marked down in relation to the power lines. Chet saw to it that the people were quickly hooked up to the electricity and only later collected the hook-up deposit. The townspeople appreciated his consideration.



"Sparks" Chet Lempe

In January, 1964, Southern California Edison bought out Cal Electric. As they started their operations there were more than 10,000 electric meter hook-ups in the entire service area in the Morongo Basin. Then, in January, 1965, Edison took over the Desert Electric Co-operative and absorbed its territory into the SCE system. Known as the Twentynine Palms District, Edison's service area for the Morongo Basin encompasses 605 square miles.

Meanwhile, back at the housing boom, Yucca Valley and its surrounding communities have continued their steady and phenomenal growth patterns. Today SCE has over 22,343 meter connections in this district with 16,833 in Yucca Valley alone. According to Bob Nordyke, the now retired city area manager, during the late 1970's and first part of the 1980's Edison had an annual 4% growth in meter connections in the district and that 60% of that percentile figure are Yucca Valley customers.

Cal Electric opened its Yucca Valley offices on November 1, 1956, next to the Plaza Pastry Shop in the Hi-D Plaza. Edison built its present site as the District Office and moved into its new quarters in September, 1968. It is located on Old Woman Springs Road near the Hi-Desert Water District offices and the Yucca Valley Airport. Forty-one employees work out of the District office. Agnes Rhead worked for Cal Electric in the original Plaza office and she has continued with Edison. Through all the years she has been a familiar face to the customers as they paid their electric bills at the District Office. She is the customer service representative.

When Edison took over Jerry Haag served as District Manager. He was succeeded by Dick Verrue, Ron Whelchel, Larry Fine, Michael San Miguel, Bill Bryan, Bill Blaine, Bob de Korne and now, Peggy Towne, the first woman District Manager in the Morongo Basin area. Michael Whelchel has taken over Bob Nordyke's position.



At Toy, SCE service planner now retired, worked with the Yucca Valley Lighting District for much of this community's growth. With his cooperation and assistance, Yucca Valley installed 243 street lights. Gene Denbow and Dick Funder continue as service planners. Obviously, there will be more street lights to come as the town's disappearing vacant land fills up with still more homes and businesses.

. . . Southern California Edison



hat last figure of (243) street lights would have flooded the five men appointed by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on March 4, 1959,

to serve as members of the Advisory Board of the newly-formed Yucca Valley Lighting District. They were Roy Roush, Earl McDonald, Dean Howell, Harold Brown and Ken Bonser.

Brown was the first chairman of the board and for the next five months he and the other directors worked hard and planned the town's "glowing" future.

The first street lights were turned on at dusk on August 5, 1959. The next day's edition of the Hi-Desert Star tells the story. The front-page headline proclaimed, "Street of Light Now Every Night." A sub-head read, "First '10' Glowed Wednesday."

"Last Wednesday night at 8, curtain time for any great performance, ten magnificent lights from arched poles flooded the main stem until the queen village sparkled like the jewel she is.

"It was a dramatic moment - the result of cooperative citizens and the organization and efforts of the Lighting District Committee and Board...

"Wednesday night when the first splash of brilliance splashed the street from Callahans to the Silver Dollar, occupants in a car from the top of the Morongo Grade saw only the beginning.

"Within two years the current program should take in six blocks of lighting with the poles 100 feet apart. Eventually, the planning includes eleven blocks - from Kickapoo Trail to the wash and close to the Alamo Market (now the Arbor Mall).

"After the lights were turned on Wednesday, Cal Electric hosted a party at Callahans for the workers on the project." ●



Neal Vocke

The Edison Company District Office, on Old Woman Springs Rd. The building was constructed in 1968 and has been occupied by Edison since September of that year.

Early Banking. . .



during the 1920's and '30's in the Morongo Basin the residents had a wide choice of methods when it came to banking. In true western style they could carry their "pokes" with them and keep a sharp eye out for bandits; or, they could bank by mail; or, they could travel the hazardous road to Banning or Beaumont and the state bank there. Each method, for far different reasons, was a bit of a risk.

Then, in November, 1947, a survey was made of the Basin. Joseph Wasserburger, of Altadena, was interested in obtaining a charter for an independent bank, to be built in Twentynine Palms. In the early part of 1948, Edward J. Kenney was elected president of the new Joshua Monument National Bank of Twentynine Palms. Mrs. Lucille Wasserburger was chairman of the board and her husband was one of the founding directors. On October 10th of that year it opened for business, making it the first bank in the Basin. Staff members were Nelson M. Mahoney, Constance Taylor and Laurence Hamaker. It later became a branch of the Security First National Bank and through the years has been at the same location on the Twentynine Palms Highway.

By the late 1940's and the start of the 1950's it was the west end of the Morongo Basin that was "growing like a weed." No longer just the spread-out homesteaders, there were now towns there and they were spreading out. Time passed and people in Yucca Valley and the other west end communities were still doing their personal and business banking by driving to Twentynine Palms, Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs, Banning or Beaumont — and they were getting tired of it. The money and time spent in getting to the respective branches was of prime consideration for such a sizeable number of people. It was obvious that Yucca Valley needed its own bank.

The Property Owners' League of Yucca Valley, Inc., was hard at work on the project as petitions peppered the community. Many volunteers were involved but none were more determined in circulating petitions for the cause than Charlie Gross.

Meanwhile, John Wuerth, Sr., one of Wuerth's Business Service, decided to supplement the league's efforts. He started a barrage of letters out to different banks asking them to consider opening a branch in Yucca Valley. Lo and behold, he found that both Security First National Bank and the Bank of America had already applied for permits to establish branches in the community. That was welcome news to the townspeople.

But, to go back in time a bit, and the sequence of events: In early summer of 1957, Eldon Smith, head of the then-operating Citizens National Trust and Savings Bank of Riverside, had traveled around the Morongo Basin looking for a possible site for a branch for his bank. The Riverside bank's Research Department toured the area and agreed that a branch in Yucca Valley would be a most desirable thing; and, in October, 1957, it applied for a permit. Permission to establish such a branch was granted in March, 1958, but, in the meantime, Citizens' had merged with the larger Security First National Bank. The latter bank's officials heartily agreed to continue with Citizens' plans and, in anticipation of the permit's issuance, signed a lease in February, 1958, for space in the one of the store-front offices east of Hammett's Automotive and Wheel Alignment. (Soon after it opened it was known as "the bank by the wiggling wheels.")



Joan Wilson Photo

Security Bank, first location, 1960.

L to R: Spencer Hamilton, Manager, LaVonda Harvich, Kathleen Holt, Maurine Seaman, Jo Kent, Dorothy Whaley, Neomia Lewis, Gwen Johnson, Betty Ehrismann, and Gail Haifley.

The people of the Hi-Desert have always turned out for Open Houses and Grand Openings. But one of the happiest and wildest events to ever take place was the Open House staged by the Security officials on Saturday, June 14, 1958! The Open House was held out-of-doors (there was no way to get even a fraction of the people inside)

... Security Bank

from 2 to 6 p.m. It was a rather warm, sunny day but the pack of over 2,000 spectators didn't mind at all as they crowded onto the parking lot.

Roy Roush, president of the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce, introduced the bank officials and the new staff to the crowd. Present to welcome everyone were Spencer Hamilton, the Yucca Valley branch manager; Al Vaughn, regional vice president from Riverside; O.B. Ellengen, senior vice president in charge of the Citizens' Division; John Fisher, vice president in charge of operations; Al O'Connell, vice president of the bank's advertising department, and Harris Moore, manager of Security's Twentynine Palms branch. The staff members included Betty Ehrishmann, Ethel Brennan, Dorothy Busick, Gail Haifley and Maurine Seaman.

Tyna English, Grubstakes Day Queen, cut the ribbon and the fun began. She also drew the lucky

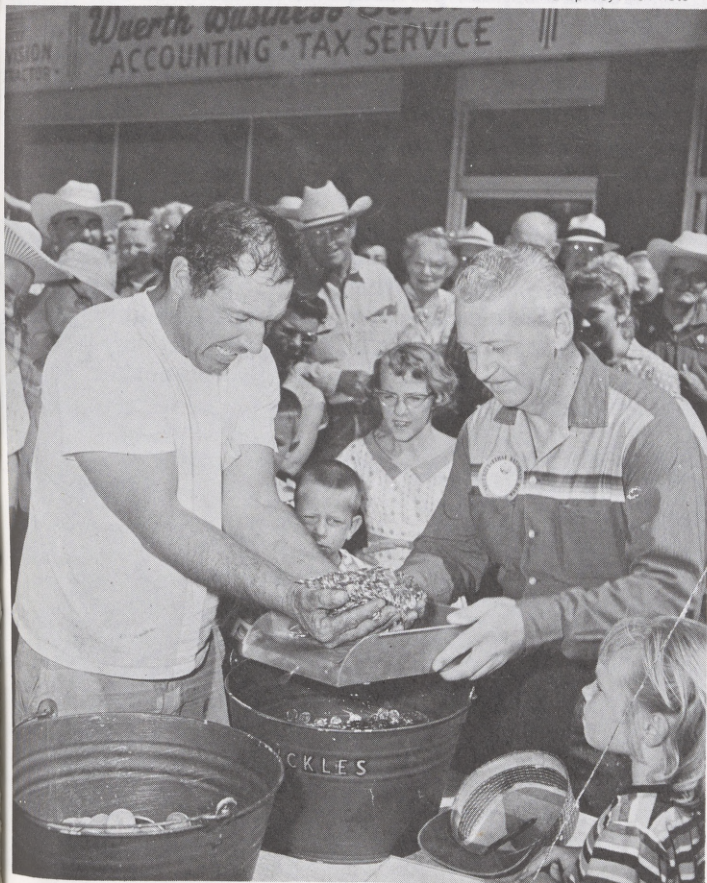


Joan Wilson Photo

Manager James Goodman, right, shown with the Security Bank Staff in 1968.

Tommy Humphreyville the "Copper King" shown digging out, 1,259 pennies at the Security Bank opening, June, 1958.

V. Humphreyville Photo



names out of a big, whirling barrel. The winners were given a chance to "get some free samples" in the Bucket of Money Grab. The first name drawn was Theresa Lowman, of Twentynine Palms, who was not present. John Wuerth was allowed to grab for her and came up with \$121. Tommy Humphreyville, of Yucca Valley, was given an opportunity to become a Copper King. He really dug in and grabbed for \$12.59. That doesn't sound like high finance, but try picking up 1,259 shiny, new pennies at one time and you'll see you've got a handful and then some! The top winner of the day was L.A. Omundson, of Yucca Valley, who dipped deep into the silver dollars and brought up \$166 worth.

For this very special occasion the Yucca Valley Women's Club acted as hostesses and provided and served 135 gallons of ice-cold lemonade and 10,000 homemade cookies!

At 5 p.m. Hamilton was interviewed by Radio Personality Dick Sinclair. It was broadcast over the Los Angeles Station KFI.

The following Monday morning at 10 a.m. sharp, Yucca Valley's first bank opened for business — and business it got! Forty residents and businessmen opened accounts in the first half-hour. The first checking account was opened by Mabel Mellette, who, at that time, had been a Security Bank depositor for 42 years. The first savings account was opened by Sharon Zetko; the first escrow was opened by Jack Renfro.

In less than a year it was generally agreed that it had outgrown its store-front and was in need of more space. A major factor in the consideration was the fact that the small branch had met its projected three-year mark for deposits *within* its initial year! Therefore, a year from its opening, bank officials were busily looking for property. It purchased the large lot just west of the building it first occupied.

Construction of the new and larger (3,400 square feet) facility took place during the summer of 1961, at a cost of \$60,000. Gene Theis, a Twentynine Palms contractor, was in charge of construction.

By the time the second Open House was held on Saturday, November 25, 1961, Ken Tornborg had become the new branch manager. He was joined by Don Kupferschmidt, his assistant manager; Vaughn, from Riverside; Frank Gilbert, a bank official; and Norman Granger, Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce vice president, in the opening festivities.

Once again, the crowds were huge and the highlight of the day was the Bucket of Money Grab. Among the winners were Myrtle Gram, of Yucca Valley, who scooped up more than \$60 in coins; and a young Jay Brownell, who was able to grab over \$40 despite his small-boy hands.

Tornborg stayed on at Yucca Valley for a number of years. He is now a manager at the bank's Costa Mesa branch. He was succeeded by James Goodman. During the years Goodman was in Yucca Valley he served simultaneously on the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital District board; the Yucca Valley Park and Recreation District board; and the Yucca Valley Lighting District board. His assistant manager, J. Ray Atherton, served on the Yucca Valley Fire Protection District board.



Don Shiflett, current manager of Security Bank.

Goodman was succeeded by Phil Quane as branch manager; and, in December, 1977, the incumbent Don Shiflett was appointed manager.

None of the original five employees are still working at the local branch but the oldest employees, in length of service, are Betty Lawson,



Neal Vocke

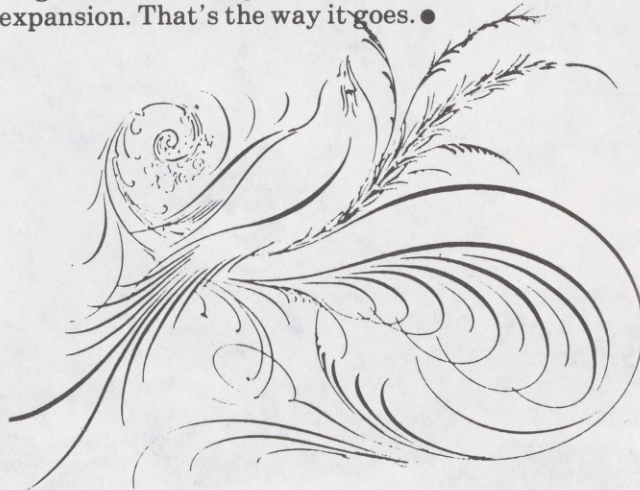
Security Bank modern 10,000 square foot building, built in 1980.

assistant manager, and Pat Hughes, senior loan clerk, who both started in 1970; and Eric Albrecht, senior note teller, who started in 1972. Ruth Maynard, assistant vice president, transferred from the Twentynine Palms branch and has been with Security for 25 years. There are now 25 employees at the local branch.

In 1964, the branch started using a computer bookkeeping system. Now, all loans except mortgage loans are handled by computer.

By 1980, a repeat performance in the need for additional space sent the bank on another land search. It, too, followed the pattern and moved to east end of town. Now known as Security Pacific National Bank, it built a modern, 10,000 square foot edifice which almost tripled its previous elbow room.

On December 15, 1980, the bank held its third Open House with its official and the town dignitaries welcoming still another block-buster crowd. There were refreshments, prizes and drawings which pleased everyone — and probably before half the participants lose their gift key-rings there'll be a ground-breaking and another expansion. That's the way it goes. ●



Bank of America



Back in 1944, Marvin R. Wood, a young man who had grown up in San Bernardino, was about to go into the Navy. As a pre-Boot Camp diversion he was invited by friends to go on a hunting trip "out in the desert and up Pipes Canyon into the mountains — the other side of the mountains." Up to the time of that trip Marv hadn't even known that such a place as the Hi-Desert existed. He also didn't know that twenty years later he would be living here.

That was his first but by no means his last visit to Yucca Valley. There were a great many changes in those twenty years. And, as proof of Yucca Valley's expanding development and future growth potential, when the Bank of America opened its first branch office and conducted an Open House on October 22, 1964, it was Marv, the then and continuing vice president and branch manager, along with his staff, who greeted the visitors.

The guests were taken on a tour of the new building which, at that time, was one of the town's largest business structures. It had over 7,000 feet of work space on the main floor and the mezzanine. In no time at all that night the place was packed solid with people and newspaper

The interior of Yucca Valley's First Bank of America. It opened in October of 1964.

Marv Wood Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Marv Wood, first manager of our first Bank of America. He is shown here with part of the opening staff, in the symbolic "opening the doors."

photographers were forced to climb onto desk tops and lean against the west wall to get pictures of the crowd. The following day when the bank officially opened for business, the photographers returned to take a few little-less-populated and more orderly pictures of the bank's general layout.

From the beginning Marv took an active interest in community affairs. He is a past president of the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce, the local Lions Club and is a charter member of the Yucca Valley Elks Club. Through the years he also attended many meetings which were of vital interest to the community — such as those concerning the hospital.

He allowed the burgeoning Yucca Valley Jaycees chapter to use the bank's lobby section in 1966, when they met weekly to plan that group's first sponsorship of Yucca Valley's Grubstake Days celebration. The after-banking-hours meetings were held with Bill Powers, a branch employee and Jaycee member, in charge. Powers is now a regional vice president and manager of one of the Los Angeles B of A offices. Marv attended a number of the Jaycee meetings himself and was caught up in the youthful enthusiasm which culminated in a quite spectacular Grubstake Days.

In 1976, in recognition of such participation, the soft-spoken manager was given a special award by Bank of America President Tom Clausen citing him "as one of the bank's most outstanding managers." His selection reflected his "community involvement, leadership, awareness of social problems and office profitability."

The latter point was but further proof of both the branch's and the community's continued growth and promise. And, so, seventeen years after the initial branch opened, on June 27, 1980, Marv and the bank, following Yucca Valley's east-end movement, held a ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the new million-dollar branch.

With feet firmly planted on individual shovels, Marv was joined in the festivities by Dave Eckenroth, of David's Store for Men and Boys; Developer Norm Essig, of Sky Harbor Estates; George Robinson, of Homestead Supplies; Contractor Bob Schoenleber, of Alta Loma Estates; Bill Bryan, of Southern California Edison and then president of the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce; Jack Everett, chamber director; Jim Snedaker, project general contractor; and Gerry Pippin, his general supervisor.

Designed by Boyle Architectural Associates, of Newport Beach, this time the branch office had 13,000 square feet of work space with fourteen tellers' windows; two walk-up and two drive-up tellers' windows; a three-window merchants' booth; a private entrance for escrow patrons and accommodations for three escrow officers; expanded safe deposit facilities; night depository; instant deposit; and a much larger parking lot. It occupies the southeast corner of the Twentynine Palms Highway and Dumosa Avenue.

L. to R. Jim Snedaker, Gen. Contractor — Dave Eckenroth, Marv Wood, Manager, Norm Essig, Sky Harbor Estates, George Robinson, Homestead Supply, Bob Schoenleber, Bill Bryan, Pres. Chamber of Commerce, Jack Everett, Chamber of Commerce Director and Gerry Pippin, Building Foreman. Bank of America breaks ground.



Part of the opening crowd at the new Bank of America.

On Wednesday, March 18, 1981, Marv again presided at the ribbon-cutting ceremonies for his second Open House celebration in Yucca Valley. With him beside the ribbon were Paul Carlisle, Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce president; Jeri Rutledge, branch operations officer; Harriet Lewis, assistant manager; Donna Wendling, Honorary Mayor of Yucca Valley; Jim Tracy, bank vice president of District Administration; and approximately 1,800 townspeople eager to see the new building. The doors opened officially, for business, the following Monday.

Marv retired on April 1, 1984, but remains active in the community by serving on the Warren Basin Water Masters Advisory Board. Marge Nathan, who took her training at the Desert Hot Springs branch, was the only employee that had been with Marv since the first Yucca Valley opening. She retired in 1982. Betty Binney came next in length of service, having started in April, 1965 and retiring as of April 30, 1985. Clarence Gronning, who was Marv's first assistant manager, is with a bank in Seattle, Wash.

When Marv retired, Tim Underwood took his place as branch vice president and general manager. The other branch officers are: Jeannette Barron, assistant manager; Chris Procter, operations officer; Linda Gunderson, assistant operations officer; Erneen Rosales, escrow officer; and Kathi Pisel, operations section head.

The remaining staff members are: Barbara Gronek, manager's secretary; Marian Conway, secretary; Linda Neal, Donna McFarland and Suzanne McAllister, utility clerks; Rita Fogel and Jay Scott, new accounts; Betty Ann Crayne, escrow clerk; Debbi Fry, vault teller; Georgia Shirey, station window clerk; Evelyn Cade, interior clerk; and Janet Arcuri, Darlene Desabrais, Theresa Hultz, Dianne Jackson, Elaine Naylor and Cheri Theile, tellers. ●

Pomona Savings



Pomona First Federal Savings and Loan Association goes the honor of being the first S & L in the Morongo Basin. It opened for business September, 1966, in the front office of Ideal Mall, in Yucca Valley.

The staff was composed of Leo Bitterman, branch manager; Melba Carlton, assistant manager; Sharay Rougley; and Patricia Cummins. A few years later the association officials purchased the southwest corner of the Twentynine Palms Highway and Joshua Lane and construction of its present building to underway soon after. The staff moved into its new and larger quarters in April, 1970.

While still branch manager at Yucca Valley, Leo Bitterman served on the Yucca Valley Community Center Authority. In March, 1978, he was transferred to the Palm Desert branch as manager. He was later promoted to regional vice president for Pomona and was in charge of nine offices in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

With his transfer, Melba Carlton was promoted to manager; Sharay Rougley, assistant manager; and Patricia Cummins became the manager of the new Twentynine Palms branch.

The first local office of Pomona Savings and Loan located in the front offices of Ideal Mall — October, 1966.

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Staff of Pomona Savings and Loan in 1971.

L. to R. Gretchen Dougan, Sharay Roughely, Sybil Smith, Leo Bitterman, now retired, Melba Carlton, who became the organization's first female Vice-President — Pat Cummins, present Manager and Vice-President, Anita Hillenbrand, and Mary Lou Oberstar, Mgr. Cathedral City office.

As of October, 1983, Leo Bitterman was retired and Mrs. Carlton, in replacing him, became Pomona's first lady regional vice president and manager. She will soon have ten offices to oversee with the completion and addition of the Palm Springs office. Patricia Cummins returned to Yucca Valley as branch manager.

Patricia Cummins is now the Yucca Valley branch vice president and manager and there have been a number of other promotions and changes. Sandy Garvin, who had been the operations officer, is now the manager of the new and expanded branch at Twentynine Palms. Cathy Dohman, who had been the head teller, has been transferred to the Palm Springs branch as operations officer.

Other promotions in Yucca Valley include Edith McDowell, operations officer; Anita Hillenbrand, savings account officer; and Claudette Nyman, head teller. Remaining staff members are: Melody Bosworth, Julie Carlton, Paula Hockstad, Dianne Kazmar, Cindi Ribera, Betty Rocco, Fay Svoboda, Durelle Williams, Mary Cloutier and JoDe Bailey.

There have also been some changes and expansions in the physical plant. There is a new decor throughout the branch office and a new Community Room has been constructed. The savings account room has moved into the old Community Room. Outside there are twenty-three new parking spaces and an additional drive-up window. ●

Banking—Savings & Loan Late Arrivals



Although this book is essentially a history of Yucca Valley, it's people, business's, organizations and services, we should give some notice to four comparatively new organizations. They are the Bank of Yucca Valley, World Savings, Downey Savings and the newest, Home Savings.

The first is World Savings. In approximately 1978 Colorado River Savings and Loan was opened in a large mobile complex near the old Safeway Store. On May 19, 1980 the complex was taken over by World Savings. The organization flourished and on May 3, 1983 World Savings opened its present, modern facility. The organization is managed by Ted Pittaway with Customer Relations being handled by Karen Floth, Judy Gill, Lou Quitugua and W. Stadler.

Downey Savings and Loan opened in October of 1980 in a beautifully designed complex built in the Joshua Village Shopping Complex. The organization has been service and community oriented since its opening. It is currently managed by Danelle Watts, with Edie M. Styles acting as Assistant Manager. Operations Supervisor is Maria Trevino, and Savings Representatives are Lois Johnson, Pat Stover, Judy Kee and Kathy Fletcher.

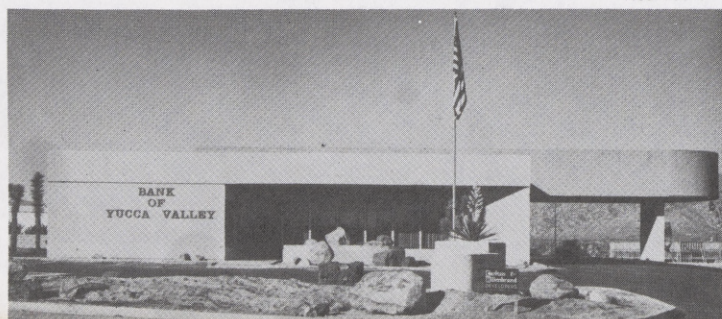
The Bank of Yucca Valley is an organization with which most Yucca Valley residents can identify. If for no other reason than community pride. This a "Home Grown" enterprise, conceived and developed in Yucca Valley. It is considered Yucca Valley's own, and is growing by leaps and bounds. — The Bank opened for business on October 30, 1980 at 7284 Joshua Lane. It wasn't long before it was evident that the original complex was not going to be large enough for this burgeoning financial institution. Soon plans were made to expand. Four and a half years after the opening of the original bank, a beautiful and much larger bank was opened at 7272 Joshua Lane at the corner of Yucca Trail and Joshua Lane. After the opening of the new complex, the Bank of Yucca Valley expanded again and purchased the First Interstate Facilities in Joshua Tree. The Board of Directors reads like who's who in Yucca Valley. F. Roy Greenleaf, Jr. is Chairman of the Board, Kensett Moyle, Al Peters, Pat Skidmore, David Vordermark, David Williams and Stanley J. Zarakov are Presidents and Board officers. The Banks Management is, as follows: David Vordermark, President, Keith C. Robbins, Executive Vice-President, William A. Davis, Controller, Rhoda Castro, Vice-President — Joshua Tree, Margaret Pendergraph, Asst. Vice-President and Manager, Yucca Valley and Catherine Robbins, Manager, Joshua Tree. The Customer Representatives and other employees are: Di Ann Benke, Lynn De Rosier, Meri Doreen Deems, Sharon Dickson, Thea L. Duffy, Suzanne M. Eads, Karen Gemette, Paul Hoffman, Julie Kidd, Teresa L. Lee, Gloria Livermore, Karen Lockman, Maria G. Lomeli, Barbara Melanson, Deanna Moulyet, Carolyn Murphy, Ada M. Neal, Angelia Paradis, Ellen Radnich, Janeen Rodriguez, Hilary L. Slotta, Theodora Stewart, Judith Stinson, Wilma Stubblefield, Joseph P. Sullivan, Jacki Thornton, Patricia Todd, Jan VanPelt, Vickie W. Vann, Teddie L. Westfall, Jacqueline Young.

Home Savings and Loan, one of the Nations largest, first opened a branch in Yucca Valley in April of 1982 at the Desert Hills Plaza. They occupied that facility until October of 1984 when their beautiful permanent facility was opened at the Southeast corner of Highway 62 and Joshua Lane. The present Manager is Robert Burke, Rachel Dixon is operations Officer, with Carol Niederhuth, Senior Savings Counselor. The Savings Counselors are Jan Curtis, Shirley Zubeck, Wendy Schaeffer and Joni Barkhuff. ●

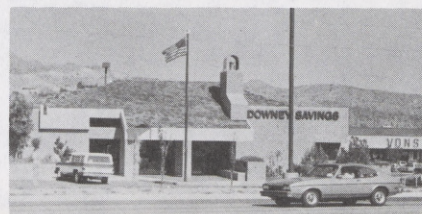


Neal Vocke

Top. World Savings First location, originally, Colorado River Savings and Loan — Bottom left: Yucca Valley Bank, first location built 1980. Bottom Right: Downey Savings & Loan, built, 1980.



Neal Vocke



Yucca Valley M.A.C.



ocal government, in an unincorporated area, tried on a "new hat" in 1974, with the creation of the Yucca Valley Municipal Advisory Council.

To that time there had been separate districts and boards of directors and different boundaries for Park and Recreation, Fire Protection and Street Lighting.

Through the auspices of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors and the Administrative Offices, the functions and representatives of these separate entities were consolidated into the single council — or, MAC.

The seven appointed council members act as a liaison between the townspeople and all levels of county government, especially the Board of Supervisors.

In addition to attending the regular MAC meetings each council member serves on one or more of the committees such as Park and Recreation, Fire, Lighting, Communications, General Planning, Environmental, Finance, Ad Hoc and Floating.

Two of the first Yucca Valley citizens to be appointed to the council in 1974 were Jule Boldizar and John List. Each was reappointed to another term. Others who have served or are presently on the council are Mrs. Doris Bigman, Alex A. Black, Ardys Asper, William A. Miller, Hap Mahaffey, Mrs. Louise McCoy, Vincent R. Lenton, Robert Hockett, Lorraine J. Shaw, Theresa Hall, Thomas McGuire, John Plavan, Helen Brusack, Paul Carlisle, Clyde L. Pechstedt, Forrest Boniface, Barbara Logan, Jan Ingersoll, Lloyd Hoffman, Larry Carver, Henry Kingston, Mike Wheelchel, Ben Sasnett, and Carl Smelko.

Carl Smelko is the present chairman. Fire Chief Clarence Gish and Park and Recreation Director Larry Harris work with the council and attend all meetings.

Linda Phalen, secretary-clerk for the Fire District, is also the current MAC secretary. Among those who preceded her as the MAC secretary were Lib Koenig, Diana Gough and Maureen Pechstedt.

The MAC meetings are open to the public — indeed, the public is urged to attend. They are held the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Yucca Valley Advisory Council Chosen



DARRYL D. OVESEN



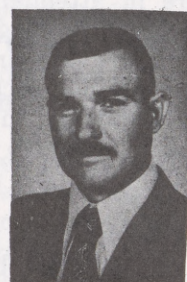
R.H. (HAP) MAHAFFEY



EVE ZIMMER



JOHN LIST



LEE V. KINNEY



JULE BOLDIZAR

Hi Desert Star Photo



STEVEN TERRY



MALCOLM J. BOOKER

The clipping, shown above, is taken from the Hi-Desert Star, March 28, 1974 — the choosing of our first municipal advisory council, M.A.C., was headline news on that day. Those pictured are top L. to R. Darryl Ovesen, R.H. "Hap" Mahaffey, Eve Zimmer, John List, Lee V. Kenney, Jule Boldizar. Bottom, Steven Terry and Malcolm J. Booker.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL GUILD



he Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital Guild, Inc., came into being after the HDMH District was created; but, in point of fact, all of the Guild's earliest members were part of the groundswell of permanent and weekender townspeople who worked so long and so steadily to breathe life into the district and to get a hospital built in the west end of the Morongo Basin.

When the first part of the goal, the creation of the District, was accomplished John Blodgett, chairman of the newly-formed District Board, invited all local organizations in June, 1962, to send representatives to meet with the directors and form a Citizens' Advisory Council.

July 25, 1962, was set for the first general meeting. Mrs. Louise McCoy, a director of the Yucca Mesa Improvement Association, editor of its bulletin, was elected chairman of the advisory council. This newest organization went right to work and was most helpful in explaining to the newcomers the difference between the newly-appointed District (therefore politically-oriented) Board and the volunteer Board of the original fund-raising entity — Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital, Inc., of Yucca Valley. The Council was also very effective in backing the special bond election drive and the election itself on December 11, 1962.

Mrs. McCoy called a special meeting of the Council on January 22, 1963; in the Buck Building. Besides the Council members, Gilbert Buck, new chairman of the District Board, and Director Horace Rich, were in attendance. Miss Mary Young and Miss Mary Hugentugler presented an offer by Mrs. Elsinore Machris to form an auxiliary to the Hospital District. The local philanthropist was repeating an interest in health care for this community that she years earlier had expressed for Palm Springs and its Desert Hospital.

A follow-up to Mrs. Machris' offer resulted in two meetings being held on February 18, 1963. At the first, a luncheon meeting at The Copper Room, Mrs. Machris presented an outline for the Auxiliary and its first panel of officers was elected. At the evening meeting the name Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital Auxiliary was selected. The title "Auxiliary" was later changed to "Guild." Also at that evening meeting Mrs. Machris was elected Honorary President. Altogether, a total of fifty citizens, representing twenty-two organizations had attended the two meetings and participated in the formation of the Auxiliary.



Yucca Valley Memorial Hospital Guild, 20th Anniversary Luncheon. Charter Members, Back Row: L. T. R. Carrie Maynard, Louise McCoy, Gladys Murrey, Sue Kelly, Nelda Owczarzak — Front Row, L. To R.: Bernita Davis, Mary Hugentugler, and Mary Young.

Those first Auxiliary officers elected that day were Mesdames Andrew J. McCoy, president; Paul Cornelius, 1st vice president; Stanley H. White, 2nd vice president; Harrison B. Frederick, 3rd vice president; Albert Garrabrant, secretary; Guy Battison, corresponding secretary; Otis Scheibler, historian; and Richard Battle, parliamentarian.

The first chairmen of Standing Committees to be appointed were Mesdames Thomas Chance, policy; Walter Owczarzak, finance; Eulalia

Standing L-R Fannie Voorhees; Isabel Cramer; Lillian Bloodgood; Esther Rosetta. Seated L-R Laura Swoveland; Frances Wade; Ruth Hurley.



Vickers, remembrance; Donald Sisk, hospitality; Jesse Marshall, special services; and Alfred Buchanan, ways and means.

On March 18, 1963, fifty-two ladies and one gentleman became charter members of the Auxiliary. By the time the charter closed there were twelve life members, seventeen patrons and 98 extremely active members.

The Guild's first project was the sponsoring of a booth for Grubstake Days, May 10-12, 1963; and, also on May 12, it sponsored a truly historic event for the area — the Hospital Site Dedication Program.

That May was a very busy month. The Guild received an offer by John Haskell and Phyllis Grubaugh, president and secretary of Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital, Inc., to turn over their unexpired lease on an office in the Evanoff Building for the purpose of opening a Thrift Shop. This became one of the Guild's major Ways and Means Projects and, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Katherine Shattuck, one of the busiest places in town.



Bob Stephenson Photo

Honored for 4,000 to 5,500 hours of service are, Back Row, L. to R. Edith Wheelon, Louise McCoy, Marquita Dorsett, Lillian Bloodgood, Frances Wade; Front Row, L. to R. Esther Rosetta and Martha Hill. Also receiving the honor was Nelda Owczarzak, not present, Ms. Hills total hours are in excess of 6,000 during her 20 year membership.



Bob Stephenson Photo

Memorial Hospital Guild, Thrift Shop: Past Presidents: Standing, L. to R. Lillian Bloodgood, Frances Wade, Ruth Hurley. Sitting: L. To R. Isabel Cramer, Laura Swoveland, and Fannie Voorhees.

Also that month, Mrs. Lucile Allard joined the officers' panel as recording secretary and Mrs. William Patton became the Guild's auditor.

The Articles of Incorporation were prepared in October, 1963, by William E. Coombs, a Rialto attorney recommended by Mrs. Patton. In appreciation, the Guild conferred an Honorary Life Membership on Mr. Coombs, who later served as our State Senator.

In recognition of those early-day volunteers, Mrs. Merrol Belfield presented twenty-six Certificates of Appreciation for fifty hours of service in

the Thrift Shop; in addition, twelve members were eligible for 100-Hour Pins and four hearty souls for 200-Hour Bars.

As the Guild grew and expanded its activities, the by-laws were revised to accommodate the work. Therefore, when Sam C. Loewen, the first hospital administrator, arrived in January, 1964, the Guild activated its In-Service Program and he had volunteers staffing his temporary office which was provided through the courtesy of Mrs. Blanche Barrett Fletcher.

Another first for January, 1964, was the establishing and editing of the Guild's bulletin, "News-In-The-Pink," by Mrs. Herman Kelly, who remained its editor for five years.

The really historic occasion took place on May 17, 1964, when the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital opened its doors at 8515 Cholla Avenue, Yucca Valley, with three days of public celebration. The hospital's Number One Patroness, Mrs. Elsinore Machris, cut the ribbon amid a sea of Pink Ladies and local dignitaries.

Gracing the lobby was the Guild's Gift Shop showcase and its Book of Remembrance enclosed in glass on a handsome display pedestal made and presented by Milton Dixon, Yucca Valley cabinet-maker. The Gift Shop furnishings were supplied by Guild funds earned in a production of "They Went That-A-Way."

In September of that year Mrs. Machris generously deeded to the Guild "The Rock House," one of her Palm Springs homes. Later, too, the Ray and Daisy Pardon Fund was established for the Guild. Still another gift came when

the Guild became the beneficiary of Mrs. Poli Shafer's estate when she died in June, 1965. She had been an active member and supporter of the Guild's Land and Building Fund. When "The Rock House" was sold in February, 1966, the Elsinore Machris Wing Fund was established; and, in May, the Walter Carpenter, Jr., Hospital Expansion Fund was set up.

The HDMH District Board annulled its sponsorship of the Guild in January, 1965, and it became a corporate entity.

On November 16, 1965, the Guild's first Awards Banquet, honoring all its volunteers, was held at the Yucca Valley Golf Club. Among the special guests were the hospital administrator and members of the District Board. By the end of that year the Thrift Shop, needing more room, expanded into the adjoining vacant store.

The death of Mrs. Machris on January 12, 1967, was a real blow to the Guild and the HDMH District and she has been greatly missed throughout the ensuing years.

For the Guild it was business as usual until, in 1971, President Sybil Miles, her directors and the members felt it time for "a home of our own." After looking at and discussing all possibilities the present building, at 55755 Twentynine Palms Highway, was purchased with the Guild's Land and Building Fund and became headquarters for both the Thrift Shop and all conferences.

Mrs. Robert Bloodgood and Mrs. Morris Swoveland were both serving as president when two major changes took place. Mrs. Bloodgood was president on March 11, 1976, when the Articles of Incorporation were changed to enable the Guild to make donations to other than the hospital district, such as the Paramedics Program through the Red Cross, Foundation for the Retarded of the Desert, Nursing Scholarships, Stroke Rehabilitation Club, \$10,000 for the construction of a nurses' training room at Copper Mountain College, \$7,000 to furnish the room and another \$5,000 for laboratory testing equipment for it.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Swoveland the membership changed its name from Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital Guild, Inc., to the Yucca Valley Memorial Guild, Inc., on September 14, 1976. Mrs. Swoveland, the first to serve two terms as president, was still in office when, in December, 1976, the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital of Yucca Valley closed its doors and opened as Hi-Desert Medical Center, in Joshua Tree, as a result of district reorganization to include the Twentynine Palms Hospital District.

In the order named the following community-minded, caring women have served as president: Louise McCoy; Frances Thomas; Frances Wade; Carrie Maynard; Besse Cobb Hall; Eldora McLaughlin; Fannie Voorhees; Jackie McCoy; Sybil Miles; Ruth Hurley; Eileen Pierce; Isabel Cramer; Lillian Bloodgood; Laura Swoveland

(two terms); Esther Rosetta (two terms); Hazel Smith, Louise Darner, Evelyn Marek and Nelda Owczarzak, current president.

In its twenty-two years of Community Service there have been nineteen presidents each with seven officers — three of whom serve as committee chairmen — plus thirteen chairmen and their committees.

In addition, there are those who serve the public in the salesroom of the Thrift Shop as well as those in the receiving and pricing department. They, too, are community-minded, caring women.

Not only does the Guild make it possible for residents of the Morongo Basin to have items they might not otherwise have; and make financial contributions to a number of smaller worthy groups; but it has contributed in excess of \$232,000.00 to the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital District. Since 1982 the Yucca Valley memorial Guild has contributed \$25,000 to the Hi-Desert Medical Center.

All of this was made possible by a very special group of volunteers who are the lifeblood of the Guild. ●



Bob Stephenson Photo

Honored for 1,000 to 2,000 hours of service are, Back Row, L. to R. Frances Huff, Margaret Schindler, Frieda Blythe, L. Sundstrom, Bobbie Brown, Sophie Duvall, Mildred Dyar, Mary Johnston, Evelyn Marek; Front row, L. to R. Margaret Frazier, Hazel Hoyt, Mildred Slagle, Theresa Prandi.

Below: Honored for 2,000 to 4,000 hours service are, standing L. to R. Maureen Sall, Hazel Smith, Nell Sarno, Alyse Romey and Betty Vaughan — Sitting, L. to R. Mary Evanoff, Olga School and Louise Colvin.

Bob Stephenson Photo





Beta Sigma Phi International



Beta Sigma Phi International was founded in Albalene, Kansas and now headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri.

Walter W. Ross was the original founder and his son Bill is now President of this fine organization of chapter all over the world with membership of over 250,000 members.

From the first chapter of seven women the Beta Sigma Phi membership has grown from a small social and cultural group to a united congenial fellowship of world wide membership.

Hardly a cultural, health, or charitable group as well as scholarship funds, school funds, has not been helped by this friendly Beta Sigma Phi organization.

Internationally these fine ladies have created several special funds to which they contribute. The Exemplar Fund, which helps Cancer research at Boulder Colorado, Brown University, Girlstown, Battered Women, (Battered Women is

one all chapters on High Desert contribute), California's favorite-Cystic Fibrosis, Canadian Poliomyelitis Foundation. Locally Joshua Tree, Yucca Valley, and 29 Palms have many civic contributions, such as scholarships, College of the Desert High Desert Campus, Players group, (which followed the Gay Nineties founded in Joshua Tree). Each group as much as they wish to allowed to do what they enjoy participating.

Any chapter of Beta Sigma Phi shall be composed of members of Beta Sigma Phi's in the community or vicinity in which the chapter is organized. It is an organization united congenially in fellowship and friendship to promote cultural development and foster liberal arts. There are the following degrees in Beta Sigma Phi- Nu Phi Mu, Ritual of Jewels, Elempplar, Preceptor and Preceptor Laureate Degree. Rituals are by progression: Any member is by invitation only and then invited into a chapter, usually a Ritual of Jewels. A member moving into the area may transfer her membership.

Loretta Fields



*Charter members of Upsilon Delta March, 1957
Back row, — L. to R., Dee Jost, Florene LaVouvie, Nina Horn, Barbara Rothrock, Virginia Wilson, Hazel Hlebo, Jean Wilson, Gwen Keyes and Janie Bartlett.
Center row — L. to R., Frances Arch, Erla Kokx, Billy Asbury, President; Helen Wollesen, Evelyn Peterman, and Olive Town Murphy National representative.
Seated are Ruth Lawson and Dorothy Sherman.*

Loretta Fields



*Back row, L. to R., Anna Lee Erfurt, Virginia Wilson, Estella Winzenread, Millie Pleuger, Hazel Hlebo, Elenor Fairbanks, Dorothy Randolph, Peggy O'Neil, Lillie Callahan, Aileen Bortz.
Middle row, L. to R., Gwen Keyes, Fran Arch, Janie Bartlett, Helen Wollesen.
Seated and kneeling, — Dorothy Sherman, Florence La Bouvie, Billie Asbury, President, Erla Kokx, Ruth Lawson, Dee Jost.*



here are now eleven chapters in our basin they joined in forming a High Desert Council. Upsilon Delta Chapter was one of the first chapters formed on the west end of the basin. Of the members of the original chapter many have passed on, moved or dropped for some reason. Erla Kokx and Dorothy Sherman are only active members of original group that are still active.

The chapter was founded in March 1957 at Joshua Tree. Billy Ashbury was first president. Helen Towne Murphy from International gave all rituals and installation that day. She still visits almost every year. Every year chapters join together for council meetings, Valentine functions, Luncheons, Summer picnics, and Founders Day. These functions are attended by almost every member on the High Desert. Now active in Preceptor Laureate Beta Beta No. 566 are members who have been in Beta Sigma Phi the longest in the area. Lee Bell Lorretta Fields, Dorothy Randolph, Dorothy Sherman, Erla Kokx, who have all received their 25 year honors or more. Other members are Betty Freese, Genie Swartout, Aggie McBride, Louise McHale, Cora Cotter, Louise Watson, Marilyn White, and Genie Deleski.

- No. 1 Susie Lenhart
- No. 2 Ruth Lawson
- No. 3 Sam Staley
- No. 4 Ms. Hemphil
- No. 5 Marion Collins
- No. 6 Barbara Gronek
- No. 7 Ms. Macrea
- No. 8 Mary Gerpheide.

Loretta Fields



Loretta Fields

Back L. to R., Fran Arch, Dee Jost, Billie Asbury, installing officer, Aileen Bortz, Dorothy Sherman.
Left side — front to back, Florence La Bouvie, Hazel Hlebo, Helen Wolleson, Estella Winzenread, Evelyn Peterman.
Right side, front to back, Janie Bartlett, Gwen Keyes, Ruth Lawson, Virginia Wilson, Erla Kokx.

MASONIC LODGE



hat now historic first issue of The Desert Star, dated April 3, 1957, had on its front page a story and a picture of a front elevation of the proposed Hi-Desert Sojourners Masonic Clubhouse to be built in Yucca Valley for the benefit of the area's youth. There was also plans for a Masonic Temple to be built at a later date. All of these plans were created by J.A. Murrey, A.I.A., of North Hollywood.

But, to get this far in the planning stage, we must go back to the source. In March, 1956, a few members of the Masonic Order got together at the home of F.H. Lafferty and planned a clubhouse which would be used especially for youth activities. At the time of that newspaper story, application had already been made to the DeMolay National Offices in Kansas City, for the establishment of a local chapter. Also, to be organized were the Rainbow Girls Assembly, Job's Daughters and the Order of the Eastern Star.

Two acres of land were purchased from Fred Storey. The property was located near the northwest corner of the Twentynine Palms Highway and Old Woman Springs Road. Jack Coffman, business agent for the local Sojourners, was in charge of the building program which got started on July 25, 1958. Thanks to the club's membership, its auxiliary and the many friends and boosters from throughout the town who gave unselfishly of time, money and labor the building project was soon completed.

The following January the club held an Open House for its \$50,000.00 building which occupied 4,432 square feet of space. Features of the Sojourners' Clubhouse were the auditorium which seats 400, the complete kitchen, dressing rooms and a 24' x 28' foyer that can also be used for smaller club meetings.

In June, 1960, Clarence Miller asked the Grand Lodge of the Masons of California for dispensation for the Yucca Valley Masonic Club and if it might operate as a lodge. The dispensation was granted. The club, at that time, had 47 members. Then, in October, 1961, the club was granted its charter and it became Lodge No. 802. Louis L. Cunningham was the charter master. At the time the charter was received the Hi-Desert Sojourners turned the building over to the lodge.

Past Masters of the Yucca Valley Lodge are Alexander F. Furton, 1962; Charles S. Watkins, 1963; Glen F. Steely, 1964; Herbert J. Reed, 1966; Ernest L. Littlepage, 1967; Carl C. Dalton, 1968; Reed, 1969; Otto Dombrowski, 1970;

Dalton, 1971; Austin A. Glass, 1972; George T. Reil, 1973; Leonard I. Delaney, 1974; Lewis E. Peters, 1975; Cecil Rich, 1976; Earl D. Trambly, 1977; Paul M. Luttio, 1978; Herbert H. Beach, 1979; Walter Jensen, 1980; Lowell W. Winter, 1981; Richard Oglesby, 1982; Ernest A. Reichardt, 1983; and Walter A. Jensen, 1984 (a repeat).

The Master for 1985 is Von R. Brown.

The Masons are strong supporters of the public school system and it is reflected in the work they do for youth. During the Grand Lodge's Public School Month, the Yucca Valley Lodge presents awards and trophies to the outstanding students, one boy and one girl, of the six local schools—Yucca Valley Elementary, Intermediate and High Schools, Sky High School, Joshua Tree Elementary School and Morongo Valley Elementary School.

On March 2, 1968, officers of the Grand Lodge of California and the Yucca Valley Lodge participated in the Dedication Ceremonies for Yucca Valley High School. Taking part in the formal and impressive program before a huge throng were Dr. Eugene S. Hopp, Grand Master; Robert A. Crigler, Deputy Grand Master; Chester R. MacPhee, Senior Grand Warden; Herbert A. Huebner, Junior Grand Warden; and Carl Dalton, Master of the Yucca Valley Lodge.

The Master for 1981 is Lowell W. Winter. Officers serving with him in the current year are Richard I. Oglesby, Donald W. Shermoen, Gordon S. Hardey, D. Kenneth Dark, Sr., Charles T. Parry, Howard P. Lanning, John C. McFarlane, Ronald P. Cook, William M. Cruickshank, Thomas L. Kinkade, Alfred M. Shinn, Jr., and Lloyd M. Raborn. Oglesby is the Master-Elect for 1982. Yucca Valley Lodge membership, as of December, 1981, stands at 230. ●

1967 Temple Association Officers: L. to R., Front Carl Dalton, Ernie Littlepage, Archie Holliday — Back L. to R., Fred Bishop, Herbert Reed, Richard Nahhas

Joan Wilson Photo



YUCCA VALLEY ELKS



he Yucca Valley Elks Lodge No. 2314 was organized in December, 1964, and swore in its first officers and members in formal ceremonies. The

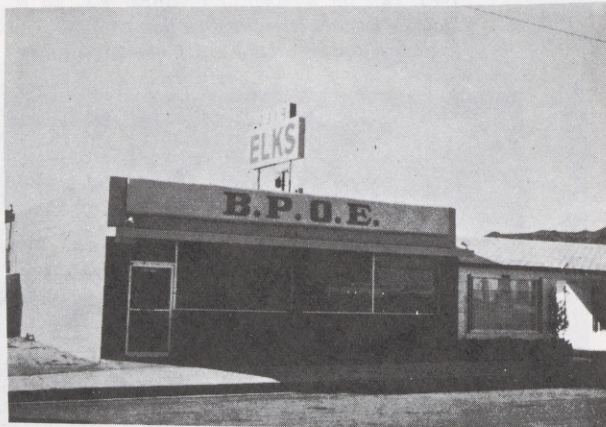
Charter Board of Officers were Charles Luzier, Exalted Ruler; Bud L'Esperance, Esteemed Leading Knight; Fred Jensen, Esteemed Loyal Knight; Charles Bellio, Esteemed Lecturing Knight; Stuart McDermid, Treasurer; Daniel Pekarovich, Tiler; Tommy Bouchey, 5-year Trustee; Col. William Edmondson, 4-Year Trustee; Robert Schoenleber, 3-Year Trustee; Dr. Paul Eidson, 2-Year Trustee; and Norman Essig, 1-Year Trustee. Bob Crawford assisted in organizing the local lodge.

At first the new Elks considered purchasing the Copper Room property at the airport. The membership was also considering property on the Morongo Grade, west of Homestead Supplies. When these locations were deemed not feasible for so young a club the search went on.

The newly-elected officers of 1966, under the leadership of Al Yeager, Exalted Ruler, pledged that their major project would be the obtaining of a clubhouse. In the meantime, the membership was meeting at the Copper Room, the school multipurpose room and other locales.

In the beginning, the Yucca Valley Elks Lodge met in a variety of locations. The Copper Room, shown at the right, was one of the very first meeting places. Shown here are L. to R. C.W. Luzien, Bob Schoenleber, the next member is unidentified, Bob Crawford, Thomas Bouchey, Norm Essig, and Col. Bill Edmondson.

Joan Wilson Photo



For a while the local Elks took over the facilities of the old G and M Market (now the Yucca Valley Paint Center). Then, in 1970, they found their home and present location — the original Community Service Club on Yucca Trail. They revamped, repaired and improved the clubhouse which has since become the scene of many Elk and Emblem Club festivities.

Other early year officers who helped to establish a fine Lodge were Adolphe Freese, Robert Ashworth, Clyde T. Bull, Jamie Caine, Arthur Bernhard, Louis Pokorney, Ed Thomas, Mel Carson, Joe Petro, Bruce Scoggins, Andy McHale, Vince Lombardi, Dwight Catron, Gene Johnson, William Shemmer, Ed Johnson and Brian Laursen.

The lodge has grown steadily in strength with more members joining each week. A larger ledge building is presently being constructed near the northern boundary of the property. When completed the existing lodge will be converted into a full-time restaurant.

The current panel of officers is Gene Johnson, Exalted Ruler; Robert Shaw, Esteemed Leading Knight; Randy Fish, Esteemed Loyal Knight; John Cuddy, Esteemed Lecturing Knight; Walter Flowers, treasurer; Ed Gacek, secretary; Joe Myott, Tiler; and William Shemmer, Alternate Representative.



Joan Wilson Photo

On the left: This meeting place was the old G and M Market.

EMBLEM CLUB



The Yucca Valley Emblem Club No. 411 was Instituted and Installed on April 16, 1965, with Barbara Hager as the Charter President. There were fifty-four new members at the close of the charter.

Today, with the membership roster expanding continuously, the club's leadership consists of Lila Hopkins, president; Betty Pope, junior past president; JoAnn Caccioppo, 1st vice president; Catherine Pokorney, 2nd vice president; Pat Myott, financial secretary; Dorothy Black, treasurer; Naeomi Reed, recording secretary; Anna Jane Tredick, corresponding secretary.

Other officers include Ruth Jeffers, chairman and 1st trustee; Millie Flowers, 2nd trustee; Paula Troegner, 3rd trustee; Irene Gacek, marshal; Ann Reger, 1st assistant marshal; Dorathea Gaston, 2nd assistant marshal; Suzanne Lee, chaplain; Janet Leon, organist; Bert Klein, press correspondent; Almeda Sloane, historian; Ruth Hawkins, 1st guard; and Mary Spencer, 2nd guard.

Early-year members who have worked long and hard to make the club what it is today include Nell Althoff, Hazel Ashworth, Lil Battison, Mary Bull, Mary Christiansen, Betty Freese, Hester Guinan, Myrtle Hudson, Lois Hutchinson, Pearl Jones, Louise McHale, Catherine Pokorney, Mabel Radke and Martha Sorden.

Among the club's regular projects are the local student scholarships program and the Americanism contests in the schools. They also have joined with the Elks in working on the Crippled Children project.

One of its more recent enterprises was the club's joining with the Emblem Clubs' State organization in participating in the "Dogs For Deaf" program. They are contributing money toward the purchase of two dogs. These splendid animals, which cost \$2,500 each, are highly trained to assist deaf people just as their counterparts serve the blind. They also, are allowed in the same public places as the Seeing Eye Dogs. ●

Home Owners League



The Property Owners' League of Yucca Valley, Inc., was organized on August 18, 1956, and was incorporated a few months later. By May of 1958, it had 150 active members, 37 of whom were charter members.

The league was a protective, non-profit organization formed "to serve the best interests of individual property owners and to combat selfish pressure groups." The planned-for, broad scope of its coverage was evidenced by the fact that it held its monthly meeting on a Saturday when the weekender/property owners could attend and participate.

Its directors were community-minded men. The first president was Bill Tenny. Among its early and very active directors were Charlie Gross,

Jack Coffman, Ralph Brownell, Robert Brownell and Dr. E.H. Kelley.

Always mindful of the protection of the town's citizens and property owners, the league's first projects included the placing of pedestrian zones across the Twentynine Palms Highway at the Post Office; the marking of the intersection lines at the highway and Old Woman Springs Road; the installing of the street lights in the business district and the formation of the lighting district; establishing a bank in Yucca Valley; requesting a new, larger Post Office; enforcing restrictions and eliminating illegal trash dumps; installing traffic safety signs; working for better streets; and working with the Chamber of Commerce on zoning.

With their caring shown in every instance, they are truly among the first and best town planners. ●

REBEKAHS



The Desert Gold Rebekah Lodge No. 425 was organized on April 25, 1959, with a small but dedicated membership.

Lodge officers that first year were Mattie Oleta Duncan, Thelma Browning, Leonora Sides, Elinore Leavitt, Ruth Meyer, Mary Benito, Virginia Denning, Cora Minor, Ben Mitchell and Graydon Browning.

Two other members who have been very active in the lodge through the years are Florence Ware and Doris Troxel.

Another local organization which has grown steadily, Desert Gold Rebekahs now number over fifty members all of whom donate many hours to the Convalescent Hospital, the Senior Citizens Nutritional Center and to various charitable Thrift Shops throughout the area. The Lodge also gives a music scholarship to a Yucca Valley High School graduate each year.

Officers elected for 1982 are Bernice Futrell, Noble Grand; Ruth Rendahl, Vice Grand; Lois Bianchi, Recording Secretary; Myrtle Whitsett, Financial Secretary; Ethel Anderson, Treasurer; Joe Caudell, Musician; Gene Osman, Warden; Mildred Stewart; Conductor; Ola Steele, Color Bearer; Goldie Burgard, Chaplain; Lucille Vinzant, Outside Grand; Elsie Helebrant, Inside Grand; Jean Abrams, R.S.N.G.; Jane Anderson, L.S.N.G.; Claudine Esquivel, R.S.V.G.; and Mary Meyers, L.S.V.G.

The Rebekah Lodge is a part of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the American Order of which was founded on April 26, 1819. In addition to the activities within the Hi-Desert, the local lodge also participates in the Order's national and international humanitarian programs. Some of these include operating Homes for the Aged and Orphans, high rise apartments for low income senior citizens and nursing homes.

In 1961, the Odd Fellows' World Eye Bank and Visual Research Foundation endowed \$625,000 to the Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, in Baltimore, and continues to contribute annually to this program. The National Order also maintains eye banks in fifteen state jurisdictions through which members may donate their eyes after death for use in corneal transplants and research.

The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs also support an educational foundation that has assisted thousands through college; support thousands of youth activities and community service programs throughout the world; contribute to disaster areas and to a World Hunger program; sponsor a annual United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth; honor the U.S. military dead each May with a Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers; built and maintains the gates to the International Peace Garden located on the United States-Canada border; and sponsors an I.O.O.F. float each year in the Pasadena Rose Parade. ●



ROADRUNNER ROUTE COMMITTEE — Members met in early May, 1960, at Bill Williams Real Estate office, Yucca Valley, to discuss sign project wherein fifty colorful signs would be erected on both sides of highway at ten mile intervals from Rice and Amboy through each Hi-Desert community down to Highway 99 (Interstate 10 Freeway). Idea was readily adopted but later abandoned as signs were stolen as fast as they were erected and resurrected.

Mar. 1960 — Ralph Olmas, contractor of Joshua Tree, has been awarded the contract for curbs and gutters in Yucca Valley that will run from Kickapoo Trail to just beyond the Glen Restaurant (Reflections Restaurant). Olma's bid was \$2.10 per running foot, the same fee as guaranteed by the Chamber of Commerce. Those wishing to participate in this program may place the necessary funds for their portion of the work in escrow or contact Harold Brown.

DESERT CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



While the growth of the town had been steady ever since the inauguration of Yucca Valley, the building boom really exploded in the 1950's when the U.S. Government, through the auspices of the Bureau of Land Management, opened up the 5-acre tracts. Even if the "weekend grubstakers" were located out in Yucca Mesa, Landers, Homestead Valley, Johnson Valley, north of Joshua Tree, Surprise Springs or elsewhere, the newcomers came into Yucca Valley to buy their building and other supplies and/or arrange for a contractor to put up their cabins. Hard on the heels of the new people who were "proving up" on their property were a number of drifter-construction workers-contractors. Some did good work, others did not.

With all this sudden construction work going on in all directions some problems were bound to crop up — and they did. Well, where there's a will, there's a way — and by Grubstakes Days Weekend, May 17-18, 1958, the Desert Contractors' Association, Inc., had been formulated. It represented all The Building Trades of the Morongo Basin.

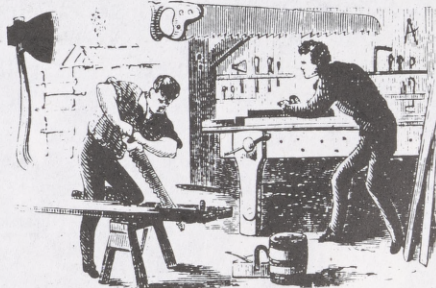
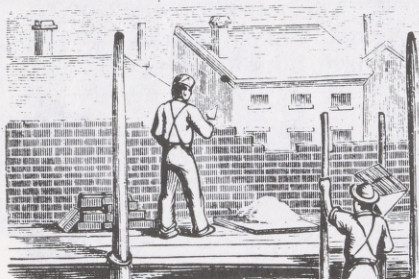
Actually, in addition to the solving of those problems, the association was formed to offer mutual protection to the building contractors, the construction workers and the new property owners.

Its first president was Earl E. Deal, a general contractor. One of the survivors of Corregidor, he had moved to the desert to regain his health. At the time of his unit's surrender, May 6, 1942, he weighed 240 pounds. When the American forces freed and released him from a Japanese prison camp he weighed 83 pounds!

He did get his health back in the Hi-Desert and, after living here for a number of years, moved down to Fallbrook and continued his work as a general contractor.

Fellow members of the Desert Contractors' Association during that first formative year were Mike's Plumbing; Dave Williams' Plumbing; Al Furton (Insulation); Luther H. Colvin (High Desert Construction Company and High Desert Development Corporation); Art Chelette (H & C Cabinets); Dale Christner (Sanitation); Fred Tripp (Electric); Eugene Walker (Roofing); Sigurd Lofthus (Tile); Robert Wilson (General Contractor); Louis Tripodo (Mason); H.D. Nogle (Sanitation); McLaughlin (Plumbing); Harry E. Johnson (General Contractor); Harold Brown (General Contractor); Yucca Valley Plastering Company; Yucca Valley Lumber Company (Associate); and Joshua Tree Lumber Company (Associate).

Also in May, 1958, Les Holland purchased road grading equipment from High Desert Development Corp. and opened up his business as Holland Paving Company.



FASCINATING FACTS

ONLY A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COULD LOVE

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Woodray's Cafe opened in the early '50's. In 1957 Odis Ray bought out his partner and it became Ray's Cafe. He sold it later that year and it became Mac's Cafe. It has been sold to other owners and has also been known as Brown's Cafe and Bunch's Cafe (Verna Bunch still lives in Yucca Valley). It has come full circle and is once again Ray's Cafe.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Yucca Valley Concrete, which had been started and ultimately owned by Chick Ristine, Gene Lemon (Forrest Farmer, manager), Lynn Pettilo and Irvin White was sold by the White Brothers to Hi-Desert Concrete in 1958. Radios were installed in the concrete trucks in 1957.

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Del's Shoes opened on February 27, 1958.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES



Boy Scouts



he first Yucca Valley Boy Scout Troop (75) was organized in 1933, just one year after Twentynine Palms organized its first troop. Lem Parsons, a past Eagle Scout himself, helped in getting the Yucca Valley troop formed and Jeff Overby was the first Scoutmaster. The troop was sponsored by the Yucca Valley American Legion Post.

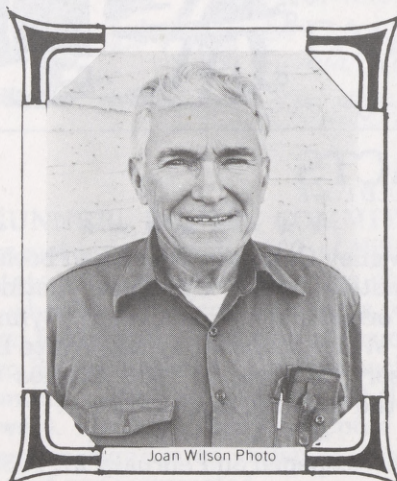
Local boys who joined that first troop under Overby and Parsons were Jean Ahola, Dennis Brennan, Larry Bullard, Gary Buxton, Terry Hammett, Jean Parsons, Mike Peters, John Reid, Mike Smith, Ervin Walden and Mike Zakery.

Not long after it was started the Yucca Valley troop, along with the Twentynine Palms Scouts, had quite an assignment for so young an organization.

In the earlier part of 1933, a "Road Meeting" had been called in Twentynine Palms and all the Morongo Basin residents had been invited to attend. The roadbed for the Twentynine Palms Highway, from the San Bernardino County Line west of Morongo Valley down to the then Highway 99, was in deplorable condition, had been for a long time and was getting worse. Those at that meeting sent a petition to the state asking it to grant some money for road repairs on that particular strip. In return they were asked to make a road check of several days duration to determine how many cars traveled over the highway.

The Scouts (well-noted for honesty), were volunteered for the campout and road-check responsibilities. In order to pay for food, supplies, etc. for the endeavor, a series of Saturday night dances and fund-raising socials were held across the Basin.

Lem Parsons



Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Top Row — Gene Parsons, unidentified, Jimmy Ash, Jerry Higgins.

Second Row: Dennis Plasse, Bob Moss, Tom Humphreyville, Gary Buxton.

Front Row: N.F.N. De Domic, Mike Marble, Lionel Plasse and Don Duval.

Then, at the start of Easter Vacation, 1933, the Scouts were taken to their campsite (where the highway water stop is now located just below the county sign) and they set to work counting cars and keeping accurate records. They camped there for ten days and while on the site, developed the water hole that still serves the thirsty cars and travelers. As a result of their excellent work, the state agreed to grant money for road repairs provided the county added its share. The road improvement was completed and much appreciated.

Lem Parsons became the Yucca Valley Scoutmaster, serving in that capacity from 1934 to 1942. The first overnight hike for the troop took



Joan Wilson Photo

Court of Honor — A member of U.S. Army Green Berets presents Eagle Scout awards to: Steve Gilbert, and Greg Nordyke. Watching with pride: Ron Webb, Far Left and Asst. Scout Master, Les Pippett

place on Friday, April 19, 1957, when the boys hiked up to Saddle Rock Springs and set up their camp. They were under the supervision of Lem Parsons, Ed Hardesty and Harold Brown.

Since that time Troop 79, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Yucca Valley, and Troop 80, sponsored by the Church of the Latter Day Saints, has been added. Still more additions are Cub Packs 74, 75 and 80. When Ron Webb was Acting Fire Chief he organized and became the Scoutmaster for Pack 75 and the Yucca Valley Fire Department continues its sponsorship. Pack 80 is sponsored by the First Christian Church of Yucca Valley.

While the members of Troop 79 were under the guidance of Scoutmaster Les Pippitt they endeared themselves to all the weary participants of the Pioneer Pass Golf Challenge. For several years running Les and the Scouts would camp overnight at historic Rose Mine. There they would prepare a hot lunch on the mountainside (including meat and potatoes cooked in a bed of coals buried in a pit) and serve a most delicious meal to one and all. Those wonderful feasts were responsible for more than one exhausted golfer or ball

spotter recovering his stamina and going on to the finish of the 19th Hole.

The first Yucca Valley boys to become Eagle Scouts were Steve Gilbert and Greg Nordyke. The ceremony took place with proud parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Gilbert, and Mr. and Mrs. Bob Nordyke, participating in October, 1967. Joel Etherton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Etherton, was the third Eagle Scout, attaining that honor in 1976.

An Explorer Scout Troop, sponsored by the Yucca Valley Search and Rescue, is presently inactive.

The Morongo Basin Scouts are under the auspices of the Arrowhead Council. Albert Gilbert, in addition to his interest in the local Scouting programs, served as a vice president of the Arrowhead Area Council and was an Executive Board member of the council for a number of years. Other adults who have been and still are active in local Scouting are Earl Pealstrom, Tom Jones and George Thompson.

An Order of the Arrow (honor campers) has been established here through the Chemehuevi Chapter of the Cahuilla Lodge. ●



Joan Wilson Photo

Cub Scouts at Victorville, 1955

L. to R., L. unidentified, Don Duval, Tim Peters, Earl Deal, Fred Laferney, Gary Buxton, John Duval, Jimmy Lace, Gene Ahola, Lawrence Dieger, Charles Helfer, Bill Zimmerman, Mstr. Smith.

Joan Wilson Photo



Yucca Valley Webelos camping out at Indian Cove, 1969

L. to R., Back Row: Roy McMahon, Larry Fine, Don Krafft, Troy Bowden, Jerry Ducey, Leslie Long, Sonny Hammett, David Eckenroth, Jack Thomas.

Standing, Middle L. to R., Brant Fine, Glenn Packer, Tad Ducey, Glen Hammett.

Front Row, L. to R., Ray McMahon, Andy Gerrard, Troy Bowden, Jr., Donnie Krafft, Alan Bowden, Doug Haggard, Bob Stephenson and Bob Thomas.

Girl Scouts



here used to be three Girl Scout Councils serving the Inland Empire—the Desert Sky, the De Anza and the San Bernardino Councils. The Yucca Valley Girl Scout Troops belonged to the latter. Following reorganization the local Scouts and Brownies were placed under the San Geronimo Council. Unfortunately, what with the reorganization, the moving, etc., the records prior to 1964 are no longer available. But there was an active Scouting Program for the young girls of Yucca Valley.

In 1964, Troop 242 was under the leadership of Mrs. Marge Miller. The following year it became a Junior Troop with eighteen girls. There was also a Cadet Patrol. Mrs. Miller was assisted by Mrs. Adele Murphy, and Mrs. Dorothy Duffy. In 1969 Mrs. Liona Marrinan and Mrs. Leah O'Brien became the adult leaders of Jr. Troop 242.

Then, in 1973, the Jr. Troop's number was changed to 742. It had fourteen girls and the leaders were Mrs. Joe Williams, Mrs. J. Wolley and Mrs. Don Krafft.

In 1974 the leaders were Mrs. Jim Pulliam, Mrs. Dee Geedes and Mrs. Karen Woodring. In 1976 Mrs. Gail Korch was the leader. She was followed by Mrs. Patsy Skidmore who served as the leader in 1977 and '78. Mrs. Donna Dugan and Mrs. Kathy Norris were leaders in 1979.

In 1980 the unit became Brownie Troop 742. The leaders are Mrs. Carolyn Layland and Mrs. Jeanne Murphy. Service unit co-chairmen are Mrs. Terri Suzarna and Mrs. Marilyn Williams. Troop meetings are held in the Ted Jurling Scout Building on Yucca Trail.

Through the various Scouting Programs many of the local girls have been able to travel far and wide. Theresa Volcic went on a Scouting tour of Europe, via Alaska. Rhonda Korch traveled to Canada and Kimberley Korch went in the opposite direction — to Uruguay.

Some of the girls, in furthering their future careers, attended professional style seminars. Dianne Volcic went to a medical seminar in Nebraska, while Kim Trone attended a seminar in South Carolina and Karen Robertson went to seminars in Rhode Island and New York.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Jean Volcic and Mrs. Gail Korch, a troop of 35 girls earned, on their own, almost \$10,000.00 which enabled all of them to go on two memorable Scout trips to Mexico City and Cuernavaca.

Mrs. Volcic and Mrs. Korch recently retired after many years of devotion to the Girl Scouts. Mrs. Volcic had over 25 years "logged." She started as a Brownie in the 2nd grade and went clear through the program as a student. She had been an adult leader for fourteen years and a trainer for six. Mrs. Korch was a Girl Scout herself for one year but was unable to continue when her family moved into an area that did not have a Girl Scout program. She made up for that, however, by serving fifteen years as a local adult leader. Did we say they had retired? As the information for this book was obtained the pair had volunteered to give a trainer course in Palm Springs.

Among other Yucca Valley ladies who have been active in the local Girl Scout Program through the years are Mrs. Betty Gastineau, Mrs. Deta Jones, Mrs. Marge Gilbert, Mrs. Brenda Cubitt and Mrs. Tie Friedman. •



. . . Rainbow Girls



xcitement reigned supreme when the First Installation of Hi-Desert Assembly L.T. Order of Rainbow for Girls was held on August 11, 1957. The theme was "Beyond the Horizon" and the Colors were blue, white and orchid.

Among the senior officers were: Worthy Advisor, Carol Blood; Worthy Associate, Joan Papendick; Charity, Dee Dee Arnold; Hope, Tyna English; Faith, Daphne Chapman; Recorder,

Karen Moore; Treasurer, Ethel Firth; Chaplain, Mary Blood; Drill Leader, Diane Peters; Love, Cara Sue Van Alstine; Religion, Midge Tunstall; Nature, Jackie Lee Gregory; Immortality, Charleen Wilson; Fidelity, Vicki Bryan; Patriotism, June Younglove; Service, Jo-Ann Cruise; Confidential Observer, Edna Moffett; Outer Observer, Travis Ann Cook; Musician, Nancy Garver; Choir Director, Sandra Harmon; Banner Bearer, Joanie Fernald; Prompter, Marcia Law; Pot of Gold Reporters, Karen Moore and Joan Papendick. •

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN LEGION



American veterans and their families, seeking a quieter life and more beneficial climate, moved into the Hi-Desert after World War I. An informal veterans' club was formed and its members were on the scene ready to help other newcomer-veterans and all others in the community needing assistance of all kinds.

By 1932, there were enough veterans, twenty, to form a post of the American Legion in Yucca Valley. In 1937, the Women's Club of Veterans' Wives was formed. This makes the two clubs the oldest organizations in the community. They were both very active in all of the town activities and in giving help to any veterans and their families. Meetings were held in the original school house at Wamego and Yucca Trails. Saturday night dances and other town get-togethers were also held in this school house. Mrs. Florence Ater played the piano and Jimmy Boldman the banjo at the dances.

In 1946, Wallace Stacy presented the Yucca Valley Legion Post and the Community Service Club, which had grown out of the Women's Club of Veterans' Wives, with approximately two acres each of land on Yucca Trail north of the highway. A clubhouse was constructed for multiple uses and, in 1947, the Legion Post and Community Service Club moved in. There was also a small building constructed on the eastern corner of the property. The Legion Post later turned their portion of the land over to the Community Service Club. The clubhouse and property is now the home of the Yucca Valley Elks Club. Where the small building was located there now stands one of Yucca Valley's public storage unit facilities.

The Legion Post and Auxiliary then held its meetings in the Multipurpose Room of Yucca Valley Elementary School but it did purchase a piece of property just west of Old Woman Springs Road. A building fund was started and patiently added to year by year with a series of fund-raising activities and donations of members and friends. Finally, in the late 60's, the building was painstakingly constructed with all volunteer labor from the ranks of the members. The new American Legion Hall was proudly dedicated in 1969.

Post Commanders from those days forward have been Dr. Herbert J. Reed, 1967; John List, 1968 & 69; Paul Cornelius, 1970; Clarence King, 1971 & 72; Ray Niemeyer, 1973; Chuck Niemeyer, 1974 & 75; Charles Law, 1976; Paul Mounce,

1977; John List, 1978; Nick Gonzales, 1979; James Yandell, 1980; and Emil McCurdy, 1981 & 82; Ralph Gaughan, 1983; George Post, 1984; and Bud Young, 1985.

One of the early-day local veterans, William T. Harmon, was later presented with a plaque of appreciation from the American Legion and was honored with a Lifetime Membership in the Legion for his untiring efforts and devotion to duty on behalf of the former servicemen living in the Hi-Desert. He was the Service Officer for all Legionnaires for 28 years helping many veterans with their benefits and hospitalization; also the widows of veterans.

"Before they had a County Service Officer out here, he traveled many, many miles to help the veterans when they needed it," said his wife, Florence Harmon.



American Legion Auxiliary

Members of the early-day Women's Club of Veterans' Wives included Mesdames Lula Mae Stacy, Charlotte Guinan, Myrta Guinan, Anna Bull, Julia Overbay, Ray Bolster, Celeste Hollinger, Berta La Ferne, Clara Livingstone, Cyril Millington, Mabel Mellette and Florence Ater.

The Auxiliary received its Legion Charter on April 2, 1943. Julia Overbay was the Charter President. Two more early presidents were Bernita Davis and Camilla Hudson.

In those years the Auxiliary continued to aid local veterans and families, but they also, twice a year, acted as hostesses at dances given for the veterans at Patton State Hospital, in San Bernardino. Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets were supplied to needy veteran's families. Great numbers of scuffies, shirts and other items were made and given to the patients at the Long Beach VA Hospital and the local unit also participated in the Gift Shop Programs for the hospitals. They also supported the District Community Service projects.

Ladies who have served as presidents from 1967 to 1985, include, in order, Florence Harmon, Ethel Hoskey, Mater Cornelius, LoRena Humphreville, Zora Evangelista, Mary Chevalier, Naomi Reed, Maude Taylor, Betty Mounce, Sheri McCurdy, Sue Benson, Dorothy Niemeyer, Annette Dwyer, Merna Wilson, Betty Mounce, Mary Hamilton and Merna Wilson.

Both the Legion Post and the Auxiliary are deeply involved in community activities and regularly donate money to such worthy causes as the Special Olympics, the Hi-Desert Nature Mu-



Ruth Duarte Photo



Ruth Duarte Photo



Ruth Duarte Photo

Past Commanders & Presidents; Top Left; Mater & Pater Cornelius — Center; Florence & Bill Harmon — Right; the Legions first club house on Yucca Trail Circa 1946

seum, the Paramedics Program and the Stroke Rehabilitation Club. They also maintain a Scholarship Fund and a College Gift Assistance Program, sponsor the local recipients to the Boy and Girl State Programs, distribute the Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets, hold the Annual Children's Christmas Party, sponsor the Americanism Essay Contest and the Poppy Pos-

ter Contest at the local schools and enter Legion Floats in the Grubstake Days Parades.

They raise their money through Rummage Sales, Bingo Games and Annual Poppy Sales. Five per cent of the Poppy money goes to the Legion Department and National Funds. All the rest of the proceeds goes to the local community.

Each Wednesday the local members visit the patients at the Loma Linda VA Hospital, Wednesday is also the day the Veteran's Service Officer is available. ●

VFW



Although there were a number of veterans living in and around Yucca Valley for many years before and some veterans clubs and groups had been organized, it was not until October 25, 1959, that the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post No. 9431, Yucca Valley, was chartered and instituted. Its Auxiliary was chartered and instituted on June 5, 1960. The late Jessie Smith was the Instituting Officer. The first Commander for the Post was Ted Morton and his wife, Iris, was the first Auxiliary President.

Lots of people think that the only thing the VFW does is sell red plastic poppies. That's not so. Actually, the patients in the VA hospitals make the poppies. The VFW buys them from the patients and twice a year holds a poppy-selling, fund-raising campaign. The money derived goes toward the maintaining of the VFW's National Home For Children, in Eaton Rapids, Mich., and other national veteran and community projects.

Jessie Smith not only held the first Wild Burro Race in Yucca Valley, but for a number of years he also made the arrangements for the Patriotic Essay and Voice of Democracy programs in the Yucca Valley and Twentynine Palms schools.

While Martin Bolha was Commander the first Memorial Services to be held in Yucca Valley were conducted in the Evangelical Free Church's Amphitheatre in Desert Christ Park. Bolha asked other groups to join with the VFW in holding the services and was instrumental in their becoming an annual event.

During Donald and Anabell Boyer's tenure as Commander and President in the 1960's they sponsored the Yucca Valley Queen Contest and worked on many of the Grubstake Days committees. Don also worked very hard on the Labor Day Breakfasts to help fund the post and auxiliary projects.

The Yucca Valley VFW was also the first organization to raise its pledge of \$500.00 for the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital which was to be built in Yucca Valley. Their donation, in memory of Melta Parker, was used to furnish the doctors' lounge.

In 1965, President Pauline Marse sponsored a Teen Queen for the Angel View Crippled Children's Hospital in Desert Hot Springs.

Post and Auxiliary members make weekly trips to the Jerry Pettis VA Hospital in Loma Linda. They take the patients baked goods, soap and shaving supplies, pen sets, stationery, etc. Once a month they hold a barbecue for approximately 40 to 45 special patients. The Auxiliary also bakes up a storm and throws Bakery Bingo Parties for everyone. Also, they all supply some very welcome company and conversation.

At one time the Yucca Valley VFW owned a piece of property and fully intended to build a hall on the premises — sometime. But, as time went on and it became apparent that there would not be enough money for the construction of a hall and their already pledged projects, the dream was abandoned and the land was given up. The Post and Auxiliary remained true to the National VFW motto, "Honor the dead by helping the living."

The 1985 Commander and President are Frank Panzarelli and Shirley Creech. ●

Hi Desert Disposal Co.



When Glenn M. Harper and his family moved to Yucca Valley in 1951, there was no such thing as a rubbish collection service—private or supported. “People had to dispose of their trash the best way they could,” Harper said. “The garbage was usually left on the desert for the wild life to clean up. Tin cans and bottles were dumped anywhere you could find a place out of sight. Many people buried their trash in their yards.”

Numerous illegal dump sites sprang up in isolated sections of town. At that time the only legal disposal site in the whole Morongo Basin was in Twentynine Palms.

In the fall of 1953, the U.S. Marine Corps took over the military base north of Twentynine Palms. As the Marines and their families began moving in it became very apparent that there wasn't enough housing in Twentynine Palms.

“So, they were renting homes clear back to Morongo Valley,” Harper said. “A Marine named Don Duffus moved next door to me on Apache Trail. We became good friends. He was having trouble getting rid of his trash, as I was. So, we decided to buy an old truck and haul our trash away ourselves. We figured we could get a few people to sign up and we could pay for our expenses of operating our truck.”

Harper, who was in charge of the meat department at the G & M Market, and Duffus started their rubbish collection service on March 1, 1954. They always picked up on weekends as that was the only time they had off from their regular work. They acquired fifty customers the first month. Their total investment to get started was \$245.00 for the truck and \$5 for a San Bernardino County Health Permit.

Each month their “side-line” business grew and they soon expanded their service to the town of Joshua Tree. Their biggest problem was finding a place to dispose of the rubbish. They got permission to dump it in the washes, but they had to hire a bulldozer to cover it all up when the washes were filled up.

Obviously, there was a real need for a disposal site nearer to Yucca Valley. Harper and Duffus went to see Dick Elliott, the head of the County Health Department.

“Mr. Elliott was a real nice fellow to deal with,” Harper said. “He realized we had a problem in this area and it wasn't going to get better. So, he took our battle to the Board of Supervisors. He got them to buy 25 acres of land in Joshua Tree. That was the first legal dump we had at this end of the valley.

The business continued to grow and then, in the fall of 1955, Duffus was transferred to another Marine Base. He sold his half of the enterprise to John Richard (who is now a local building contractor). Also, in 1955, the two new partners named their business the Hi-Desert Disposal Company; it was registered as a fictitious name; and Richard came up with the firm's motto: Our Business Is Picking Up.

Again, the operation kept on getting more customers as new houses and whole new neighborhoods came into being. Harper and Richard ran the business together for almost two years. Then, Richard made a major decision. He wanted to get into the building trade and needed money to get a good start. He sold his interest to Bob and Elsie Howell in 1957.

Meanwhile, Harper, in turn, had his own decision to make. Should he give up his job as a meat cutter and work full-time as a disposal company partner, or, should he sell out to the Howells and turn his full attention to the market? The latter won out and on January 1, 1959, the Howells became the sole owners and operators of the Hi-Desert Disposal.

Howell, who also started on the weekend pickup routine, was an electrician and took on grading jobs on the side. After he bought the full business he and Elsie went to Chicago, bought a new truck and drove it back—thus introducing the first legally-enclosed disposal truck in the Morongo Basin. They also brought in the first diesel disposal truck—a Hendrickson.

Now, after 22 years, their customer list is bulging more than ever and they service the homemakers and merchants of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Morongo Valley. They employ eight people besides themselves.

The equally droll Howells have retained Richard's motto and have added a slogan of their own: We Give You Double Your Rubbish Back If You Are Not Satisfied! ●

Bob Howell shown with one of his original disposal rigs.
Hi Desert Disposal Photo



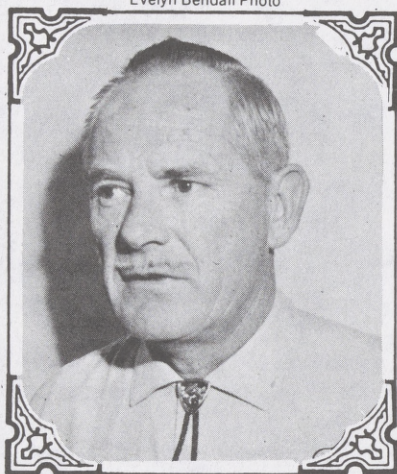
Doctor John A. Bendall



course!"

If you were to ask most of Yucca Valley's old-timers who you would be referring to if you mentioned "Doc" they would instantly say "Doc Bendall, of course!" Naturally, because from the time he moved to Yucca Valley in March, 1951, he represented the world of medicine to the regular residents and to the ever-increasing number of weekenders who were swelling the population figures from Friday nights to Sundays.

Evelyn Bendall Photo



Doctor John A. Bendall

For those in need of medical attention, the gentle, jovial Doc soon became a much beloved man and an indispensable member of the community. However, although he had all the finest attributes of the old-fashioned country doctor he should absolutely not be thought of as one who chose the rural life so he could stay comfortably behind the times. After all, his nickname is "The Flying Doctor" and that speaks for itself about keeping in tune with the times.

John A. Bendall, born in London, England, got his medical school training in California. He worked his way through those schools and tells of the times he and some fellow students combed the neighboring areas and sharpened knives and scissors to earn needed money. There was a lapse of eight years between the time he finished high school and enrolled in Glendale Junior College to start on his chosen profession. He took his pre-med at the University of Southern California before going into Osteopathy. He then finished his education at the Osteopathic College of Physicians and Surgeons in Los Angeles, graduating in 1944. After interning at a hospital in Maywood, Calif., he entered private practice in Burbank.

When he moved to Yucca Valley in 1951, he bought a home on Bannock Trail which later became the headquarters office for Teleprompter TV Cable and is now the location of the Living Stream Christian Fellowship Church. That same year he bought a building on the Twentynine Palms Highway (formerly Peggy's Cafe) and opened the first medical office in Yucca Valley. He proceeded to remodel it and then he put a Spanish tile roof on it. That was the only tiled roof in town at that time. He sold that building in 1952. Later occupants of these quarters were John Martell, attorney; and Gil Buck, surveyor. The present occupant is Dr. Vernon R. Smith, who has his dental offices there.

After selling the highway property, Doc added a medical office to his Bannock Trail home. By this time he was into all kinds of community activities. Shorty Orr helped him plant all the shade trees in Hi-Desert Park when it was being developed. He joined the Yucca Valley Lions Club and in 1951-52 he built Triangle Park for the benefit of the people (life and traffic was slower then). Doc is also responsible for the Sabretoothed Tiger being installed in Triangle Park. The tiger was the first Antone Martin statue to arrive in Yucca Valley. Reverend Eddie Garver, the Desert Parson, brought it up in his truck. The tiger made a spectacular entry in the 1952 Grubstakes Days Parade, after which Doc and the Lions Club moved the statue into the park, facing it to the east and the daily sunrise.

Doc had taken an option on a rather historic 80 acres of real estate and, in 1957, he moved his medical offices to the north-east portion of the acreage, better known as Warren's Well. He set up in the old adobe house, added new living quarters and the whole operation became his third medical office.

What with all the babies he was delivering (approximately ten to twelve a year) and the sick and injured he was tending to, it's hard to see where he found the time but he next graded off a portion of the property to the south and built the Yucca Valley Airport and The Copper Room (now the Red Baron). Doc is understandably proud to report that his was the first airport built in the United States where pilots could fly into and park their planes in their own yards or property.

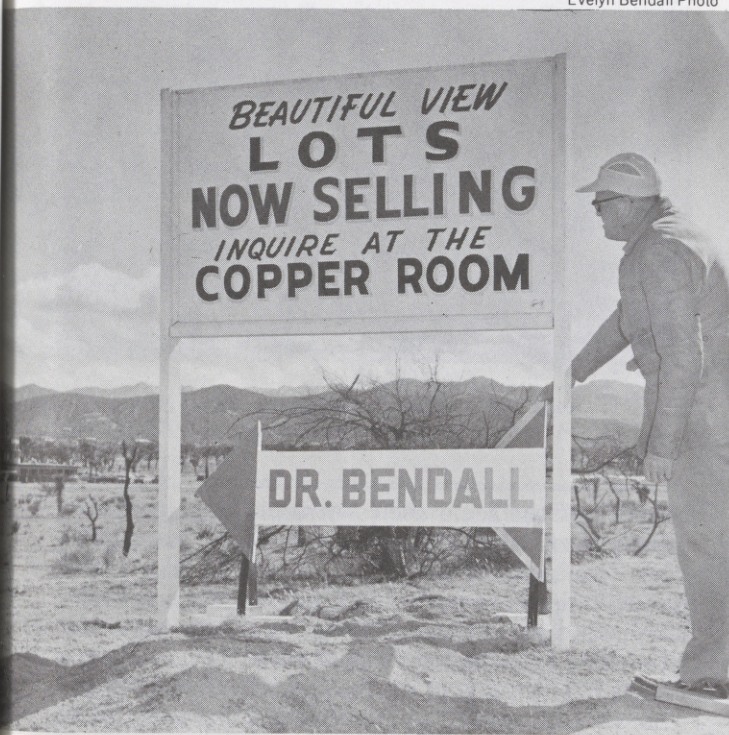
He became an FAA Medical Examiner for the Federal Government in 1962. Soon pilots were flying into the airport from all over, taxi-ing over to his office from the landing strip, getting their regular flight physicals and flying off again. Doc did quite a bit of flying himself and is also proud of the fact that he had a perfect record—never an accident in 31 years of flying!

Obviously not one to rest on his laurels, in 1964, he built his fourth medical office and home—on the airport, where else? Then, in 1966, he was selected and sent to Madrid, Spain, by the Federal Government to attend the Flight Safety Foundation Seminar.

Dr. Charles Bigman and his wife, Doris, bought Doc's fourth house and medical office in 1969. The Warren's Well house was previously sold to Louie and Garnett Stockton after Louie flew in for a physical, liked the airport concept, brought Garnett (also a flyer) up to see it and they very happily became the new owners.

Doc built another home—this one in the Friendly Hills section of Joshua Tree—in 1972. Also in 1972, he was named "Man of the Year" by the Yucca Valley Soroptimist Club. On that occasion Mr. and Mrs. Phil Clark, of the Clark Art Center, presented the Bendalls with a portrait of their most beloved pet, "Poo-dink," which was painted by Yucca Valley Artist Katholeen Perry.

Evelyn Bendall Photo



As usual, Dr. Bendall is right in the center of things. Note his sign, just below the sign advertising "Beautiful View Lots." Dr. Bendall lived close to the airport, as shown here, and had much to do with early aviation in Yucca Valley.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Apache Mobile Home Park opened in 1965.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LoRena Humphreville, who had been a Yucca Valley resident since 1930, opened LoRena's Clip 'n Curl Beauty Shop in July, 1958.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Yucca Valley Women's Club was organized in 1949. Ann Pietschman was the first president.

Doc Bendall, who had been a champion of the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital from its inception, worked in the Emergency Room at the Yucca Valley medical facility from 1972 to 1975. At that time he sold his Joshua Tree home, moved back to Yucca Valley—and retired. His wife, Evelyn, went into semi-retirement as a housewife. Prior to that and through the years she had been his office manager, nurse and co-pilot.

The Hi-Desert Medical Center has made him a Physican Emeritus and an Honorary Member of the Hospital Staff.

It saddened his friends, whom he had medically treated and cared for through the years, to see how his own health was failing in his last years. He kept his love of life and his wit and humor right up to the end, loving nothing better than to swap the latest jokes via an in-person or telephone visit. Dr. Bendall passed away September 30, 1984. ●



Joan Wilson Photo

The foursome shown here were attending the first Hearts Ball, at the Copper Room in 1962. The two couples shown are: L. to R. Robert Schoenleber, Margaret Schoenleber, Evelyn Bendall and Dr. John Bendall.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Yucca Valley Garden Club (at first called The Dirt Diggers) was organized in May, 1951. The Garden Clubs in the Hi-Desert, a most popular retirement area, had the distinction of having more male members than any other clubs in Southern California. Also, because so many of their wives had very weak wrists (induced by arthritis) there were more men here seen carrying their wives' handbags into the stores, restaurants and post office for them.

Paul Griswold



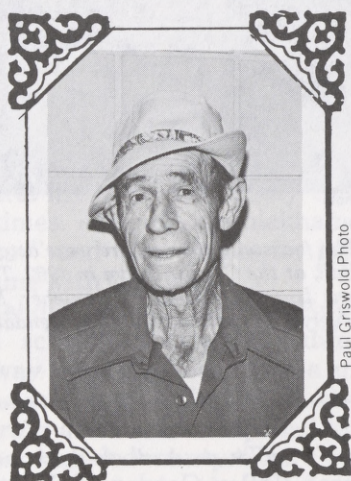
aul Griswold, who grew up to be an electrician like the rest of the male members of his family, first came to the Yucca Valley area as a young boy.

The year was 1924, and he came up from his home in Redlands on a camping trip in "Pipes Country" and on up into Pioneer Pass. For him it was love at first sight.

From then on every time there was a school vacation, and on many, many weekends, young Griswold would "hit for the high desert hills." During his winter visits he ran trap lines.

He stayed with John Olson, the original locator and owner of the Onyx Mine, in his home in Pipes Canyon below the mine. Olson must have gotten a kick out of the youthful enthusiasm of his outdoor-loving guest. There was always plenty of hunting and fishing.

He even rode, as an extra hand, on some of the cattle round-ups for the Talmadge Brothers. School books couldn't compete with that! Griswold said there would be anywhere from 1,200 to 1,600 head of cattle and more, brought down for the winters. They would feed on gamma grass — *afiliaria*. "This high desert was covered with it, kids could play hide and seek in it. And it had as much food value as alfalfa," he said.



Paul Griswold — "A Special Citizen"

His love for the high desert never wavered, not even after one particularly memorable automobile trip in 1927. On the trip out he had eight flat tires from Whitewater to Warren's Well, where he camped! Headed back home, one

of the tires gave up the ghost. It just couldn't be fixed one more time; so, he drove from Cabazon to Yucaipa on the rim of the wheel.

In June of 1930, Griswold also helped make adobe blocks for Jim Dever's new house at Warren's Well. The adobe was obtained from the foot of the hills immediately at the start of Pipes Canyon, just off the present-day Old Woman Springs Road. They mixed the adobe mud, straw and hay in wooden forms. When finished, the adobe blocks were 12" x 16" x 4".

Griswold said Jesus, a Mexican specialist in adobe, was at the well and showed them all how it was done.



Paul Griswold Photo

Paul Griswold in his 1928 Chevy. Taken on what is now 28 Palms Highway, near the present Don's Feed Store.

One of the local men ran a still up in Water Canyon. At the time he was one of the workers at the well, "mixing mud." Two of the local cowhands were also working there as mixers. Griswold said one day the three got to sampling the still's product and soon they were having a high old time. One of the cowhands fell off his horse, and, when the other one laughed at him, he threw mud at him. A sudden fight was on and soon they both fell in. At the sight of them both covered with mud — "Well," said Griswold, "then everyone laughed."

Following the tremendous winter floods of 1937-38, John Olson and Griswold blasted the rocks away from The Narrows, of Woods Canyon, and also in Burns Canyon. Devilsgate was a road, built by Bill Gullick, to take the place of the damaged Burns Canyon Road. He built Devilsgate using a home-made tractor made up of used tractor and automobile parts.

During World War II, Griswold worked at the magnesium plant in Henderson and Boulder City, Nevada.

He married Lily Reeder, also from Redlands, in 1933. But it wasn't until August, 1945, that they came to live in the high desert. They moved in at Pipes Ranch, which, at the time, was owned by John Talmadge and Jim Stocker.

He showed his wife all of the territory he loved so well, including all of Pipes Canyon; the portion of the Pioneer Pass route called The Golden Stairs, because of the gold-colored rocks lying in a series of terrace formations; Round Valley, near the old Rose Mine; and on up past Baldwin Lake.

Paul Griswold Photo



Left: Paul Griswold — 18 years old, 1930.

Right: Lil Griswold in a High Desert Snow, 1949



Paul Griswold Photo

One of the times they were hiking they found the remains of an Indian camp. Another day they were riding in a Model T Ford across the open countryside approximately from Burns Canyon and present-day Pioneertown to the east. There was no road, just the tire tracks of their Ford, so they tied strips of a red bandana onto bushes and trees to mark the way.

Frank Bull, a canyon rancher, spotted the markers and busily connected the road from his ranch to the new tracks — and that is how Skyline Road came into being and ran from the Bull Ranch out to the Victorville (Old Woman Springs) Road.

In those days all travelers carried extra water, oil, gasoline and tires, too, if possible, so they wouldn't get stranded out in the wilds. They also carried repair kits, blankets and spare waterbags. That's not a bad idea for these days, either.

At Pipes Ranch in the '30's and '40's there was 23 full inches of pure water, at nine gallons a minute, running out of The Pipes 24 hours a day. The water ran into and created a very nice, small

lake or pond. "It was just like an Eden," said Griswold. "There were many springs all over, there was lots of water everywhere around," he said.

It was also in 1945 that Griswold took Tommy Humphreville, fresh out of the service, on a hunting trip. They got the largest deer the pair had ever seen. They were pretty hot and tired by the time they got back to Pipes Ranch.

Griswold (a true friend but with a fiendish streak) suggested that they clean off in the pond. He had drained the pond the day before and knew that all the water was ice cold, the sun not having had sufficient time to take the chill off. They took off their dirty clothes; Griswold hesitated a moment but Humphreville dove right in. Griswold said, "Tommy shot up out of the pond and he was actually moving over and across the water like a rock is skipped over the surface."

"I ain't gonna ever trust you again," gasped the shivering Humphreville. "But," said Griswold, "we really were good friends and deer-hunting partners for years, till I got too old." As a matter of fact, the many crazy, funny adventures the pair got involved in would make a good comedy television series.



Paul Griswold Photo

Tom Humphreyville and Paul Griswold with High Desert game, 1940.

Griswold was one of the first electricians to move into the high desert. He wired the first new house to be built in Yucca Village, after Fred Storey's house had been built and wired by someone from "down below." From then on he was pretty busy with new and old houses as electrical service spread across the Morongo Basin.

Two other early-day electricians formed the partnership of Hauser and Nichols. Hauser eventually moved away and Ralph Nichols moved into Twentynine Palms where he is still in business.

Paul and Lilly bought property southwest of the Redden homestead in Yucca Valley and have lived there contentedly for a number of years. Their three children — Paula (Poh), Sherry (Dykes) and Garry — went all through school and grew up in Yucca Valley. Garry is still living here. Paula and her family live in Rialto.

Sherry is married to Ted Dykes who, back in the '60's, was a Deputy Sheriff. In those days, as far as all the local people were concerned, Ted and Roger Melanson were the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. Sherry and Ted are now living in Big Bear where he is a Sheriff's Lieutenant. In the not-too-distant future Ted will be retiring and all their old friends here are hoping they will move back to Yucca Valley.

Through the years Paul became well-known for his "green thumb." Both at Pipes Ranch and at his own property he had fruit trees and grew abundant amounts of big, beautiful vegetables and a variety of fruit.



A 1947 photo of Lil Griswold with two of her children Paula and Garry. The location is obviously, High Desert.

One of Paul's "often bagged" deer in the early 40's.



Paul Griswold Photo

The ever present "Dynamic Duo" — Tom Humphreyville and Paul Griswold with deer — circa, 1946.



Paul Griswold Photo

A 1947 shot of Tom and Paul in what is now Country Club Estates. The year was 1947.

He was way ahead of present-day natural resource and energy conservationists. At his home, 35 years ago, he dug out and drilled a well and built the windmill tower. More recently, he built a second windmill tower but had the well drilled for him by someone else. ("It's tough to get old!") Eleven years ago he built a solar hot water system for his home. But this was nothing new to him. He said he has been building these solar hot water systems since he was twelve years old. Years ago he built a solar system behind the bunkhouse at Pipes Ranch. "The water was so hot we had to mix cold water with it," he said.

There is a plaque on the dining room wall that pretty well expresses their easy-going, contented philosophy. It says, "Dog tired in the evening? Maybe you've been growling too much during the day."

Paul and Lilly have led a good and happy life here; but, when they talk about Pipes Ranch and life "the way it was," they get dreamy expressions on their faces and their eyes sparkle. ●

ALL INDIAN POW WOW



y far the largest, most spectacular, single-effort fund-raiser conducted by Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital, Inc., for the benefit of the local medical facility was the All-Indian Pow Wow, held in Yucca Valley on September 26-28, 1969.

Fashioned after the internationally famous Flagstaff Pow Wow, it featured an All-Indian Parade, in costume, down the Twentynine Palms Highway each of the three days before the Pow Wow Grounds opened; an All-Indian Rodeo each day; a carnival; Indian-style refreshments; booths where Indian arts and crafts were on sale; and the Encampment, where the public could visit with the Indian families.

With the exception of the parade all of the action took place at the old Western Sky Ranch Club, now the Black Rock Canyon Regional Park, situated between Sky Harbor Estates and the Joshua Tree National Monument.

The winning All-Around Cowboy, named at the conclusion of the rodeo, won Poco Tepeco, a registered quarter horse; a trophy saddle; an air-condi-

tioned horse trailer; and a silver engraved trophy belt buckle. The stallion was obtained through the courtesy of Art Miller; the saddle was donated by Don McDowell, Don's Hi-Desert Western Supply; the trailer was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Van Heusen; and the silver belt buckle (with others for other winning contestants) was donated by the HDMH Guild.

After dark each evening there was a truly spectacular Night Ceremonial with bonfire-lit dancers in gorgeous traditional costumes, flashing colors, pulsing drums, chanting voices and the rhythmic jingling of bells and rattles. Each Tribe performed a different ceremonial dance. The program always ended with all the Indians in the Friendship Dance in a huge circle around the bonfire. The last night the audience joined the circle for a memorable finish.

Members of virtually all the Indian Tribes in the United States were invited to attend the Yucca Valley Pow Wow. Among those invited and represented were the Navajo, Hopi, Apaches, Havasupai, Pima, Papago, Maricopa, Mohave, Chemehuevi, Yuma, Paiute, Yavapai, Zuni, Keresin, Tanoan, Jemez, San Juan, San Ildefonso, Laguna, Cochiti, Taos, Acoma, Isleta, Santo Domingo, Santa Clara and Rio Grande.

Plains Indian Tribes were the Cheyenne, Sioux, Crow, Blackfoot, Pawnee, Kiowa, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Creek.

The Fire-Lit Indian dancers thrilled all who were lucky enough to see them. There was a full moon and a large contingent of Indians making each evening a memorable one for all attendance.

Joan Wilson Photo





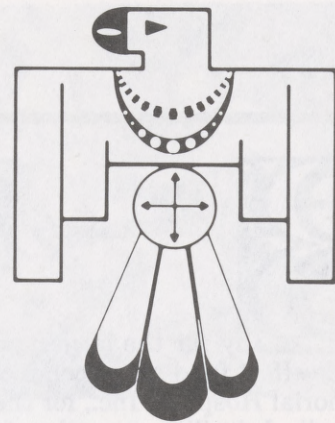
Joan Wilson Photo

Indian Eagle Dancers photographed during the first and only "Yucca Valley Indian Pow Wow." It is hoped by many that the "All Indian Pow Wow" will someday be started again.

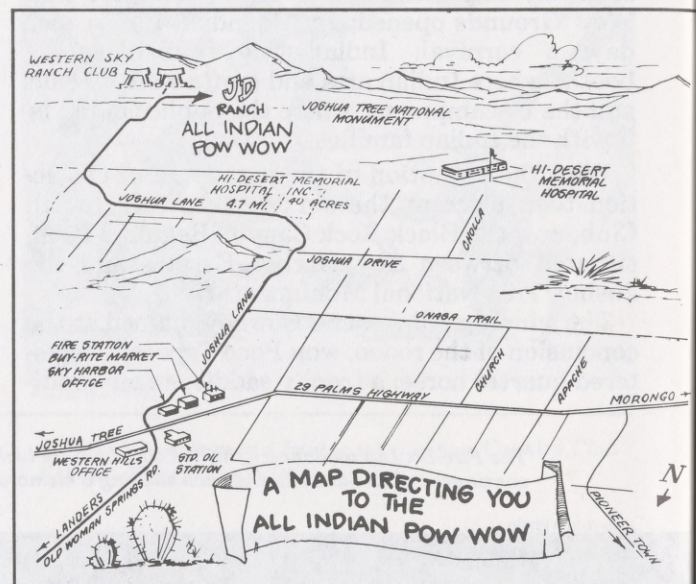
Special invitations were extended to the 25 Tribes of the California Mission Indians including the neighboring Morongo, Twentynine Palms, Cabazon, Cahuilla, Mission Creek and Soboba. Other California Tribes were the Augustine, Barona, Baron Long (Viejas), Campo, La Jolla, Los Coyotes, Manzanita, Mesa Grande, Pala, Pauma, Pechanga, Rincon, San Manuel, San Pasqual, Santa Rosa, Santa Ynez, Santa Ysabel, Sycuan and Torres-Martinez.

William Hanson, then vice president of Hospital, Inc., closed his business office and donated his time and labor to constructing the rodeo arena, the chutes, holding pens, bleachers and other facilities at the Pow Wow site. Working with him were Lou Holland and John List. This was in the hottest part of the summer and it was hot, dusty work.

One of the illustrations used in the brochure for the Pow Wow.



Above is the symbol used for the "Yucca Valley all Indian Pow Wow." Below is shown the map directing people to the Pow Wow grounds at the Western Sky Ranch club.



(C) JOAN WILSON 1969

The first Pow Wow in 1969 was intended to be the start of an annual fund-raising event, sponsored by Hospital, Inc. However, the HDMH District Board of Directors disapproved of Inc.'s involvement and issued a restriction against any further Pow Wows.

Hospital, Inc., did spend more money than it took in, but it was pointed out (and acknowledged by the U.S. Bureau of Internal Revenue) that all fund-raising efforts of that magnitude (including the famous Bob Hope Desert Classic and a number of well-known recurring telethons) lose money the first few years, but, once firmly established, produce a great deal of charitable revenue.

If it had been allowed to continue and grow, the Pow Wow would be an annual Yucca Valley attraction for, by now, thousands of people in and out of the Hi-Desert; and Hospital, Inc., would have a very successful and permanent fund-raiser on its hands. ●

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE



Imagine, if you can, Yucca Valley of today, without stores, services, gas stations, restaurants or any enterprise, whatsoever. What would the area be like? Would you be here? Would this be a thriving, growing town or just a watering hole for the myriad desert creatures that inhabit the area? Well, we obviously don't have to wonder. Due to the foresight of a handful of enterprising people, we do have all those things that go to making a town like Yucca Valley. But we must not forget those hearty Souls that first brought private enterprise to this area.

As we drive up and down Twentynine Palms Highway we are aware of huge markets, drug stores, and restaurants, in even bigger shopping plazas. The growth has been gradual, but there has been growth. — Now! imagine traversing the same highway, say fifty or sixty years ago. If you came through the area in 1920, you had to carry extra gasoline. The first gasoline available in the area was as the Lone Star Ranch in 1923. The ranch was located where the HI-D Plaza now sits. The Lone Star Ranch was one of our first businesses. Private enterprise had come to the Valley.

However, just driving through the area, one could see potential for growth. It was obvious that people would be living here, in ever growing numbers. One of those people making that observation ultimately opened another business. The Ervine Market opened in 1936. Other markets soon followed, and we were off and running. Since the first grocery stores started in the thirties, we have gone through many periods of growth. Food was and is a thriving business in Yucca Valley.

So many people had foresight. It's doubtful that any of the original businesses, especially with their original owners, are still with us. But, that's not the point; they were people who gambled on the area, gambled and won. It would take a full page to list all those business' that have started in this area. Sure! some failed but their willingness to take a chance on Yucca Valley proved successful for more people than those who failed.

Real Estate is an area that must be addressed. Without the men of foresight who gambled on the Desert, we might all still be in Los Angeles, or San Diego or wherever, trying to escape the city on Friday — "Get Away Day." We might well be one of those "Weekend Warriors" who traverse our area on a weekly basis. But, we are here, and to a great extent we owe our presence in Yucca Valley to the much maligned "Men of Foresight" who developed this areas' Real Estate. It's doubtful that most of us, given identical conditions, would have invested in the High Desert forty to fifty years ago. Property was cheap, but it had little to offer in creature comforts. It took men of vision to see the possibilities. They invested, many years ago at a fraction of what the property is worth today. But!!! and it's a BIG BUT, they did invest. They developed: They gambled. It seems only fair that the real estate pioneers of our Valley are now reaping the harvest of their effort. Remember! it was a Real Estate developer that brought us Joshua Village and Desert Hills Shopping Plazas. It was Real Estate Pioneers who brought us our first curbs and paved streets. Most certainly none of us should feel indebted to them, but the Real Estate developers of this area do deserve our thanks for a job well done.

Much could be written about the coming of private enterprise to Yucca Valley. Our restaurant business has grown from the original Bouchy's Wood Ray Cafes in 1949 to our present aggregation of fine restaurants catering to the varied tastes of our town. Whatever it might have been, there was always the person to fill the need. We've had brick plants, small and large water companies. We've seen the development, and in one case, the destruction of the Butane/Propane business. There have been shirt factories, clothing stores and shoe stores. Drive in theaters and aircraft manufacturers. Almost anything the human mind can conceive has been tried here in "Heavenly Acres." The dominant thought here is that those who came here before us were not afraid to try.

There was a time, not too long ago, when the needs of this area were met or filled by wagon trains, such as is shown on top of page seven. Everything had to come from Banning, or other towns, far removed. Isn't it nice that some of those who preceded us had the fortitude and the vision to bring business and its benefits to Yucca Valley. ●



Joan Wilson Photo

The Lone Star Ranch at the site of the present Plaza. Walter Harrell moved there in 1923, establishing the first gas station between Whitewater and Twentynine Palms. Mr. Harrell wanted the town named Lone Star and the name was shown on the AAA maps of the Mojave and Colorado Deserts from 1937 until 1949, when it was changed on the maps to Yucca Valley.



Joan Wilson Photo

The Way We Were



Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Above; Mr. & Mrs. Walter Harrell who opened the areas first gas station in 1923 (top) below; George Evanoff in his market, in the 50's.

Mary Evanoff Photo



Top: It started as Hardestys'; then the Post Office was added; Above the store became Osborns; below Osborns rebuilt. A typical growth story in Yucca Valley.

Joan Wilson Photo





Joan Wilson Photo

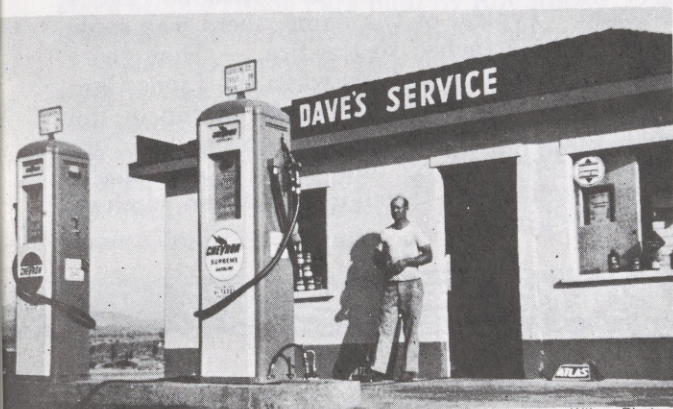


Bob Stephenson Photo

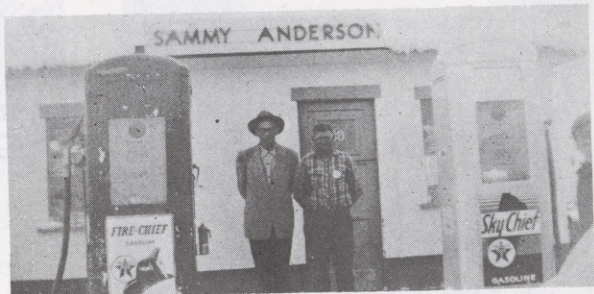
Top, left the original Wilshire Oil Station built in the early forties and torn down in 1968 to make room for the present Arco Station. Shown top right. The location is 29 Palms Highway at Fox Trail — Right; Jule Boldizar's Shell Oil Station in the forties — Below; Dave's Chevron about 1948 Dave Craig shown in front of his station.



Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

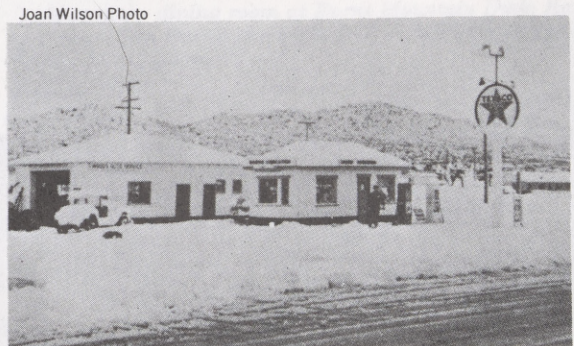


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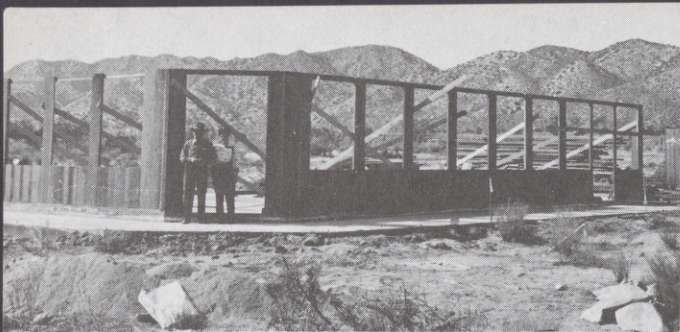
Joan Wilson Photo

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Left; Lilley's Market & Gas Station opened in the thirties by Burt Cunningham. Note the automobile and gas pumps; both obviously from the thirties era. Below left; the Gulf Station was originally the Wilshire Station, moved from Fox Trail. Below, the first Texaco Station built in the forties and owned by John Stephenson. Above; Sam Anderson, R. and Doc Toothhacker who bought the business in 1951.



Tom Bouchey Photo

Tom & Gwen Bouchey standing in front of their "in construction" Restaurant



Tom Bouchey Photo

The completed "Boucheys." Tom & Gwen are shown with two friends.



Tom Bouchey Photo

Above; Tom Bouchey at the stove of his very successful restaurant. Below; Hal Bahr, in sports shirt, at the bar of Callahans just after becoming owner.



Hal Bahr Photo



A panoramic view of "Burnt Mountain Dude Ranch." The skating rink is shown at the center, top.



The photographs shown on these, and the following few pages represent the growth of Yucca Valley, in pictures. Some are without caption and some are self explanatory. These businesses and the people who started them gave us our beginning. Notice the building and opening of Boucheys. It later became Callahans, ultimately owned by Hal and Dottie Bahr. The building burnt down in the seventies, as "Little Chicago." Typical of the name, there was some controversy attached to the fire. — Then there was the time, at Boucheys when the Lions Club had a dinner to celebrate the formation of the Lions Club. The restaurant was too small so Tom Bouchey rented a large tent, placed it next to the kitchen, and served through the kitchen window. Now; that's ingenuity.

Below Ann Castellucci in a caretta in front of Luigis. This photograph was doubtless taken during one of our early Grubstake days celebrations.

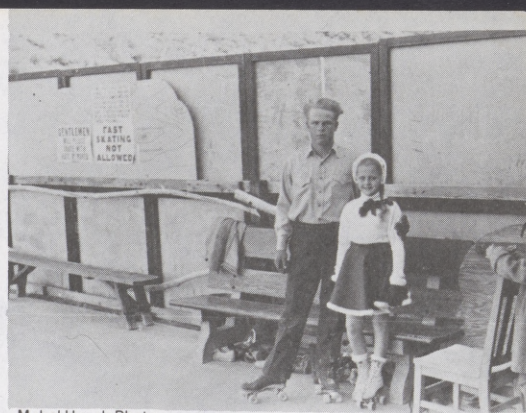
Joan Wilson Photo



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Joan Wilson Photo



Mabel Housh Photo

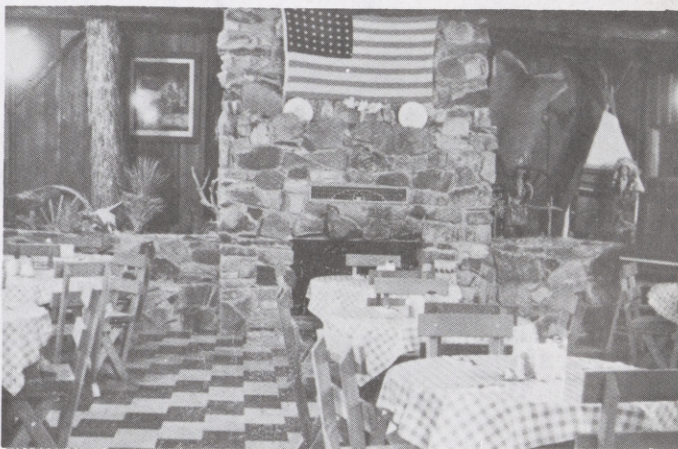
Top; Susie Fowler and friend at the Skating Rink at Burnt Mountain. Below; Harry Housh, owner and builder of Burnt Mountain Dude Ranch.

Woodrays Cafe was the original. It was also known as Mac's Brown's & Bunch's Cafe. There was Ann & Luigi Castellucci. They built Luigis Cafe in the fifties. Old timers fondly remember Harry Housh' Burnt Mountain Dude Ranch. There they served family-style Chicken dinners on Sundays. Many current residents remember the fun. There was also a skating rink and a Mobile Home Park built by Roy Roush. The Burnt Mountain Ranch was a busy, happy place.

As the photographic story unfolds, it should be easy to see the constant growth of the area. Remember, these were entrepreneurs — gamblers who saw value in our Desert town and proceeded, on their own, to develop a desert watering hole, and "wide spot on the road" into a burgeoning, modern desert community.



Mabel Housh Photo



Mabel Housh Photo

Above; the dining room at Burnt Mountain Dude Ranch. Below. The Burnt Mountain Bar, seen through a part of the Dining Room.



Joan Wilson Photo

Bottom ; the original Woodray Cafe. Right; the same Cafe called Mac's. It has also been called Bunch's and is currently called Ray's.



Joan Wilson Photo

Mabel Housh Photo

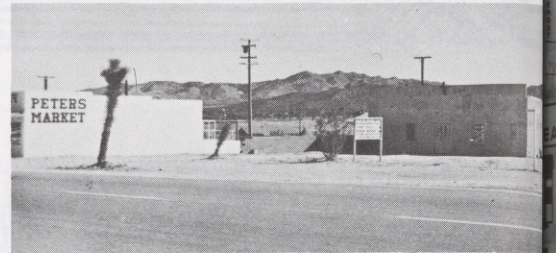




Rose and Woody Potts



Clay Tunstall Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

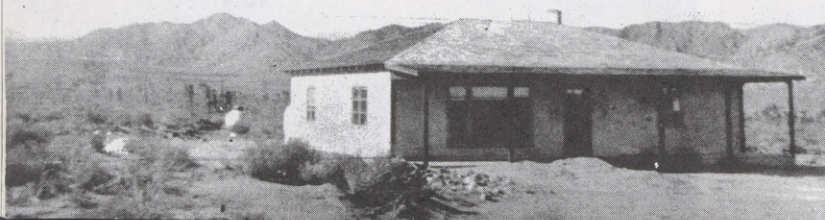


Joan Wilson Photo

Joan Wilson Photo



David & Val Eckenroth Photo





Joan Wilson Photo

above; the corner of Deer Trail & 29 Palms Hwy. in 1950. Below; the same corner twelve years later.



Joan's Collection



Marvin Krantz Photo

The beginning of Paradise Realty. Note the price of Real Estate. The year is in the mid-forties.



Glen Steeley Photo



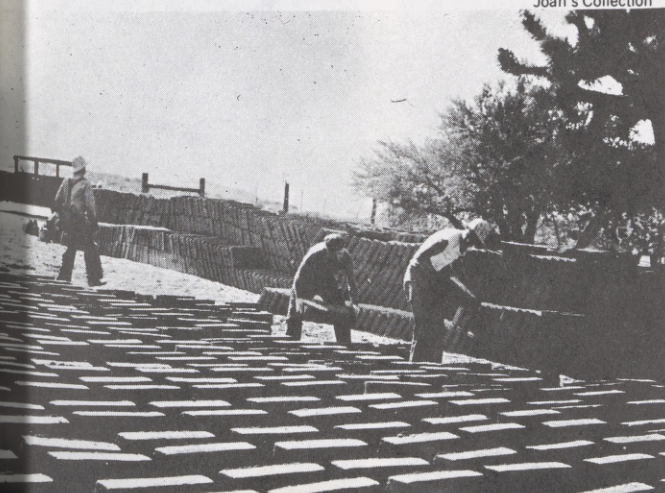
Joan's Collection



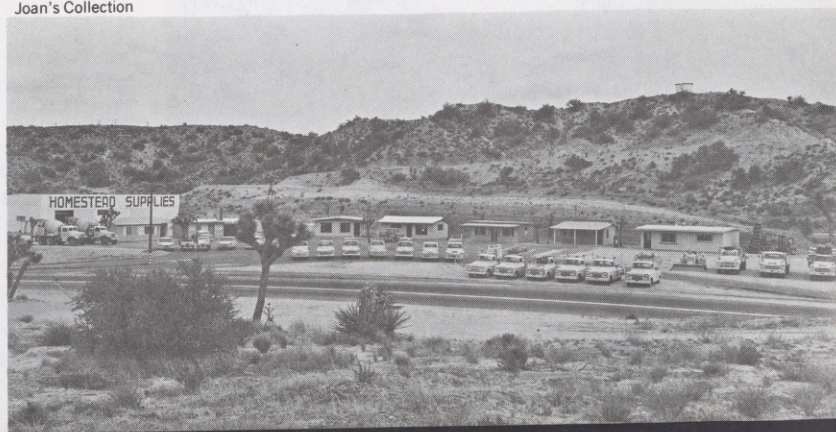
Marvin Krantz Photo

Above left; Glen Steely in his Sporting Goods Store around 1967-69. Mr. Steely now operates Glen Realty. Below left, Grant & Bob Reddin making Adobe brick at Kickapoo and Mountain View, Circa 1930. Above right; Harold's Hairdressing, now Sodaros Furniture. Below right; Homestead Building Supply in the 50's. Note the Pre-Fab Homesteaders Cabins.

Joan's Collection



Joan's Collection



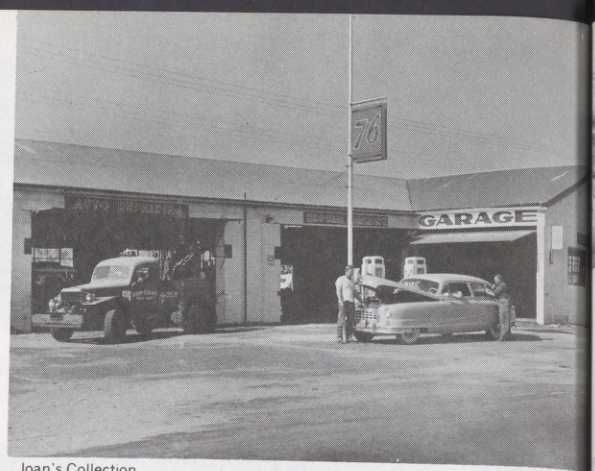


Wanda Mounts Photo

Remember the candy stores, top photo on Wamego Trail and 29 Palms, Wanda Mounts, owner. (Below) Photo on the corner of Plaza Center, where Jelly Donut Store is now Laura Lee Candies, owner Laura Frazee, year 1960's.



Laura Frazee Photo



Joan's Collection

Above; Clay Tunstall's Garage in the Fifties. The business is now operated by Lee Usher Tires. Below; the Star Market and Fire Station area in the Fifties. Note the small size of the Fire Department. This was taken prior to the building of Star Market.



Joan's Collection



Del Moss Photo

Left; Scene at Dirt Diggers Party at Frank Ferrises. Below left; the old Del's Shoe Store. Now the building is occupied by United T.V. and Appliance. Below; Lyall Building materials truck in the late Fifties. The business is now Pioneer Builders Supply. At right; Star Market under construction with Bill Pace shown below, laying cement floor.

Joan's Collection



Joan's Collection



Joan's Collection





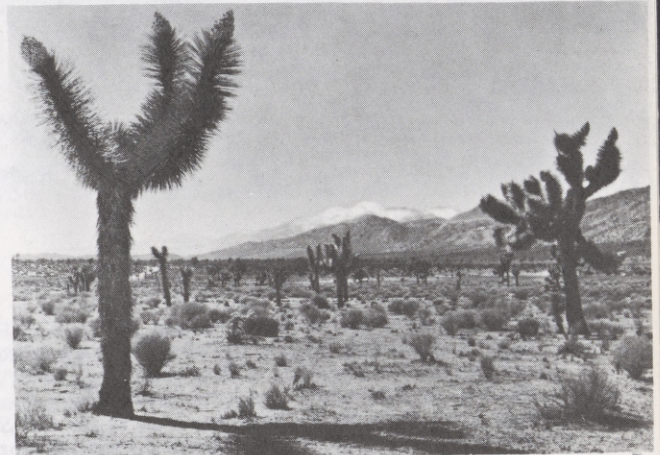
Joan Wilson

Above: the entrance to 29 Palms Highway off of US 99 in 1949. Below left; the new wind generators are not new. This wind tunnel was built to generate electricity in 1926. This location is just west of the intersection, shown above.



Copyright 1985

Linn Twins Collection



© Phil Dunham Photo



Tom Bouchey Photo

Above; A Phil Dunham Photo taken in the thirties. Just behind the Joshua Tree on the left is the intersection of 29 Palms and Old Woman Springs Road. Left; A Tommy Bouchey photo of the Pioneer Town Road. Below left and center; in the forties. Ken Witting published a Newspaper during the week and sold Real Estate from this location at 29 Palms Hwy & Victorville Rd. It is now Western Hills Realty. The well being drilled here is in 1946. Below right; the Branding Corral at the Stacey & Stocker Ranch. The road going off to the right is Pioneer Town Road.

Ken Witting



Joan's Collection





Bob Stephenson Photo



Ken Witting Collection



Ken Witting Collection

Upper Left; All this is left of 29 Palms Highway, bottom of photo, prior to the building of Highway 62. — Top center of photo. Top Center; 29 Palms Highway in the twenties, top right; Pioneer Town Roads in the thirties. Right top; Cattle Drive in the Twenties close to the Old Safeway Market. Right, Bottom; the Grasshopper invasion in the Sixties. Bottom left; an aerial view of Yucca Valley in the Mid-Fifties. The beginning of the Golf Course is visible, at center. Bottom right, the Chamber of Commerce tree planting project in the late fifties. — All of the Photos shown on this page show Yucca Valley in its formative years — it is possible that another 50 years will bring High Rise buildings?? — anything is possible.



Ken Witting Collection

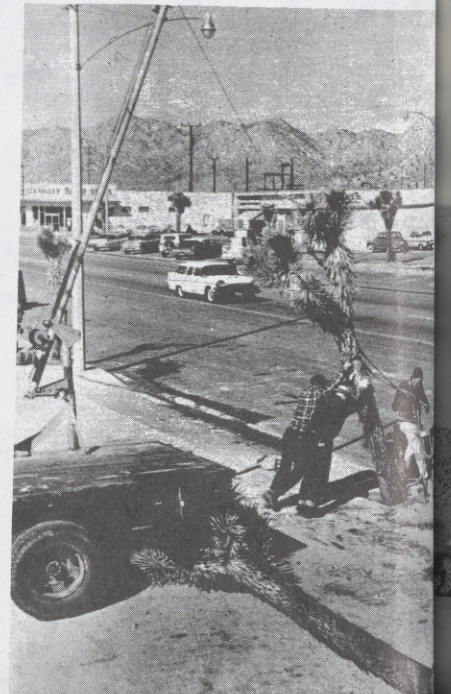


Joan Wilson Photo

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo



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At right and below; two aerial views of Yucca Valley taken in the early Fifties. Note the sparse development in both photos.



WILLIE BOLDZSAR



WILLIE BOLDZSAR

Below; A menu from Yucca Valley Inn in the Fifties. Note the price of a T-bone Steak Dinner — \$2.00 complete. — The five acres of heaven ad refers to the small tract Homesteads in the Fifties.

Lorena Humphreyville Photo

YUCCA VALLEY INN	
T-BONE DINNER	2.00
COLD PLATE, Potato Salad	1.25
HAM & EGGS	1.10
BACON & EGGS	1.10
OYSTER STEW	.65
2 EGGS, TOAST & POTATOES	.25
CHEF'S TOSS SALAD, large	.50
POTATO SALAD, large	.50
small	.25
HOT SANDWICHES	
STEAK SAND with Potato Salad	.90
BAR-B-QUE BEEF or HAM SAND	.75
PASTRAMI	.75
CHEESE BURGER	.75
HAMBURGER	.45
GRILLED HAM & CHEESE	.75
BACON, LETTUCE & TOMATO	.75
HAM & EGG SAND	.75
GRILLED CHEESE	.35
FRIED EGG SAND	.40
HOT DOG	.40
COLD SANDWICHES	
TURKEY SAND with Potato Salad	.80
COLD BEEF	.70
COLD HAM	.70
TUNA SALAD SAND	.45
EGG SALAD SAND	.45
COLD CHEESE SAND	.35
SPANISH FOODS	
CHILI with Beans	.30
CHILI SIZE	.15
CHILI BONES	.25
CHILI VERDE with Tortillas	.25
HOT TAMALES	.25
TACO with Beans	.25
ENCHILADA with Fried Beans	.60
SOUPS	
CAMPBELL'S SOUP	.25
DESSERTS	
PUMPKIN PIE	.20
HOT MINCE PIE	.20
PIES	.20
CAKE	.20
DOUGHNUT	.20
ICE CREAM	.20
DRINKS	
HOT TEA	.15
MILK	.15
ICE TEA	.15
BUTTERMILK	.15
HOT CHOCOLATE	.25
SOFT DRINKS	.15
WESTERN BOTTLE BEER	.25
EASTERN BOTTLE BEER	.25
DRAFT BEER	.25



Above; Jack Weaver with the Yucca Village Building Supply Truck, circa-1951 — Below; Luigi's Italian Cafe in the Fifties. It was owned by Ann and Luigi Castelucci.



FIVE ACRES



OF HEAVEN

STORY OF THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT

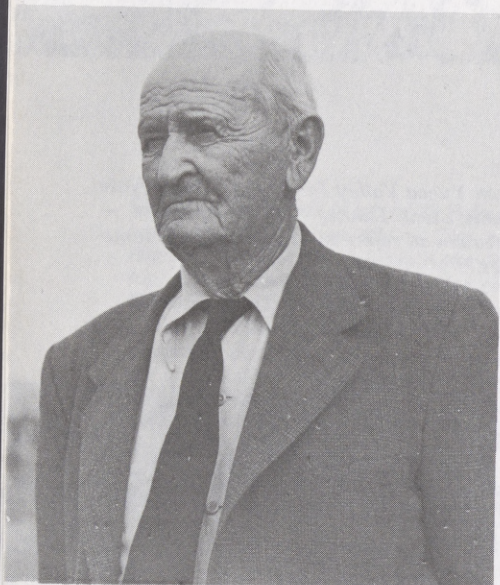




Floyd & Charlsie Peters 1



Joan Wilson Photo 9



2



Mary Evanoff Photo

3



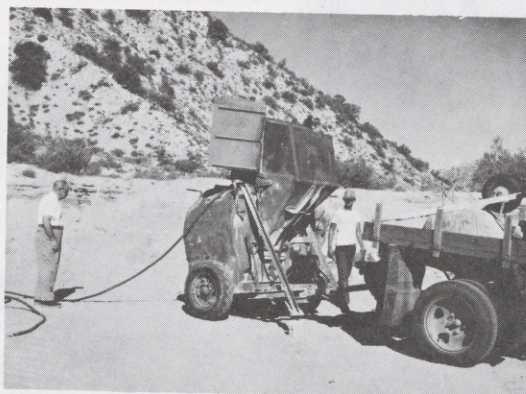
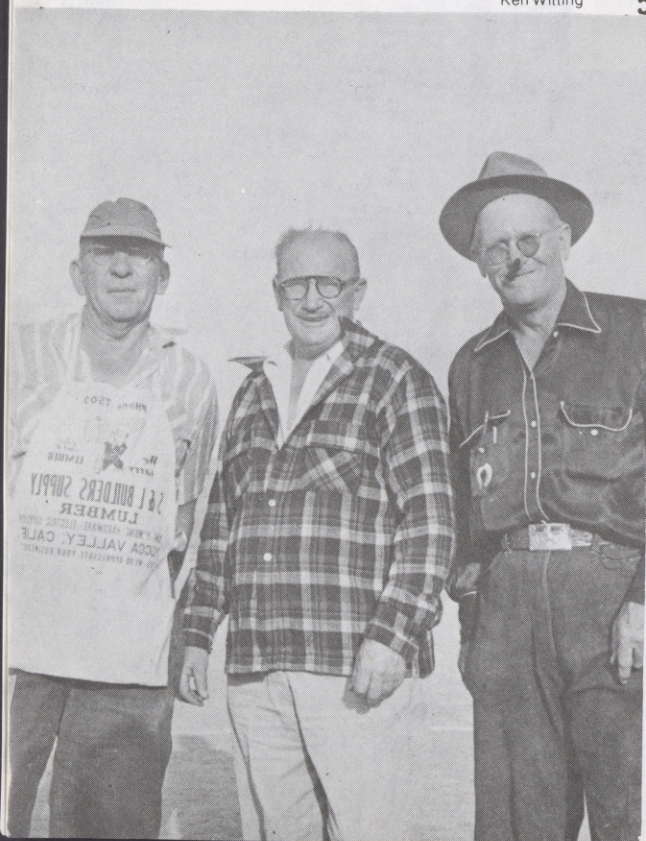
Ken Witting

5

Joan Wilson Photo

4

- (1) Yucca Valley Follies, L to R. John Arch, Nancy Marble, Diana Urnston, Judy Hammett, Sandra Harmon, Sandra Peters & Millie Boyes.
 (2) John Redden, who homesteaded here in 1923.
 (3) Mary and George Evanoff
 (4) Fred Story, one of the areas first developers.
 (5) Three of our early citizens — L to R — Capt. Louis O.D. Thomas, Pres. Lions, Bill Pace.
 (6) O.D. Thomas getting sand in Pipes Canyon.
 (7) Bates Marriott, Yucca Valley's first druggist.
 (8) Dottie and Hal Bahr.
 (9) The founers of Woodray Cafe in 1948 — L to R Pearl Wesley Wood, Gussie Gothman, Odie & Vi Ray.
 (10) Yucca Valley Players L to R Sandra Peters, Ralph Kingston, Dorothy Kingston, Sitting, Norval Jefferies, kneeling, Jean Arch, Margaret Buxton & Pat Doonan.
 (11) Jo Engle, Vesta Peters & Florence Harmon at Com



Joan Wilson Photo

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Neal Vocke



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Lorena Humphreyville Photo



7



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9

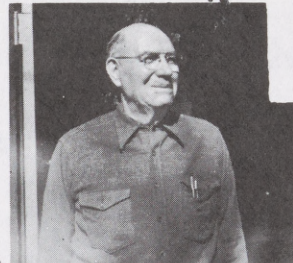
Marbley Club function — 1960.
 Sandpiper Hardesty.
 Bill Pace and his Bucking Bronco.
 Tommy & Gwen Bouchey, who built Boucheys
 (hans).
 Ethel & Roger Stine.
 Loretta Fields who brought us our first Western
 Art & Alma Katje — Art was the first full time presi-
 of the Chamber of Commerce.
 Ethel Hoskey, Art Hoskey & Vi Ray.
 Charlesie Peters & John Arch in the 1954 production of
 "Ain't Done Right by Nell".
 Francis & Lilly Callahan.
 Kaye Suzanne Pluss (Humphreyville), Thomas Craig
 Humphreyville, Joni Marie Humphreyville.

Photo

20



Floyd & Charlesie Peters 10



12



Joan Wilson Photo

13

Ethel Stine Photo



15

Joan Wilson Photo



Loretta Fields

14

16



Joan Wilson Photo

11



Alma Katje

17

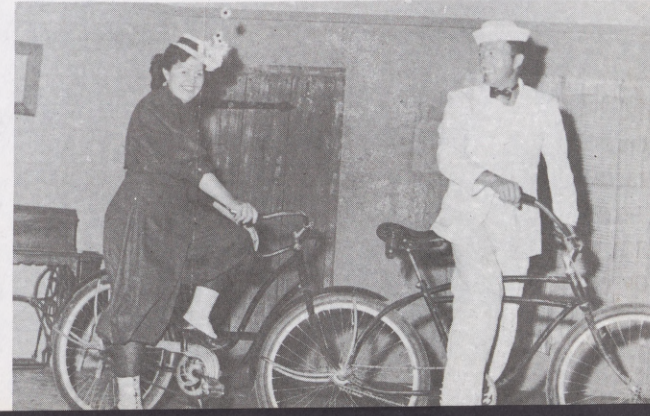


Joan Wilson Photo

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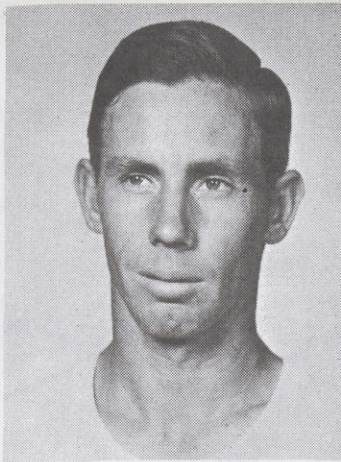
19

Floyd & Charlesie Peters

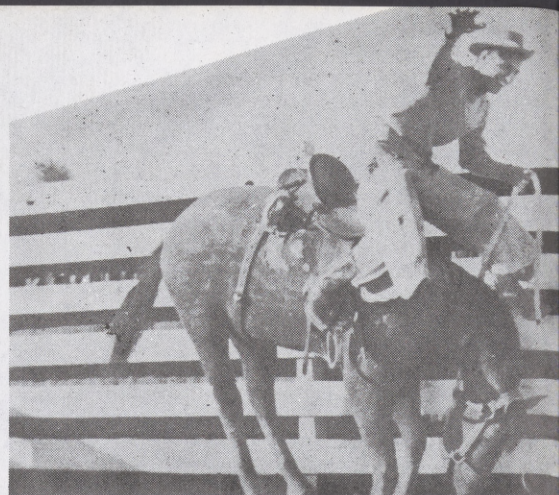




Floyd & Charlsie Peters



Steve Heard Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

Above Left; 1955 Grubstake Days, Dave Hansen, Eddie Garver and Charlsie Peters at the organ. Center; Steve Heard, Above Right; Bill Pace aboard his mechanical Bucking Bronc — Right; Floyd Peters, Dick Diederich and Charlsie Peters building their Pool in 1947.



Floyd & Charlsie Peters



Floyd & Charlsie Peters



John Vogel

Above left; Yucca Valley Players, L to R., Vesta Peters, Margaret Buxton, Paula Scott, Diane Urnston, Dick Peters, Sandi Peters, Buck Buxton, Cab Carebert, Ken Witting & Muriel Perrin. Above right, Flora McCann, Grace Campbell, Hugh Estus and Guy Richards try panning gold in a creek made by our first well, the year, 1945. Below left; the Yucca Valley Players, Tobacco Road, 1970 — Center; Dan Pekarovich grading a new tract in the Fifties. Below right; L to R. Paul & Ruth Albert, Margaret & Lee Cotton at Albert's Liquor Store in the Fifties.

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo





Alma Katje

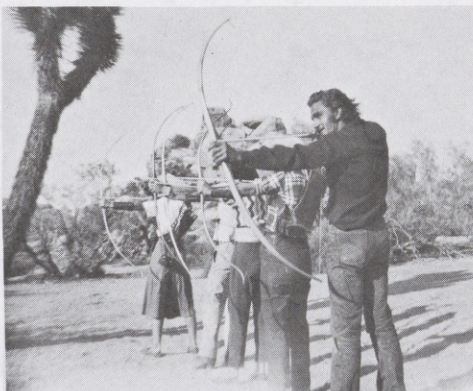


Alma Katje

Both photos are of Alma & Art Katje in 1946. They developed Country Club Estates. Below left; George Dart, Joe Freeman & Joe Hammett helping to subdivide the area. Below center; Mr. Graske, early Citizen and Archery Instructor.



Joan Wilson Photo



Ken Witting Collection



Joan Wilson Photo

Yucca Valley had a difficult time getting on the map. Above right. Congressman Harry Shepperd and Yucca Valley Leaders. The 1960 census report failed to count Yucca Valley as a town. When the smoke cleared away from the righteous fury of the Yucca Valley residents when found they were not to be counted as as community, but "by the nose" for San Bernardino County, wires and letters dispatched to the Census Bureau, and Congressman Harry Shepperd, Washington, D.C., brought immediate results. A representation from the Geography Division, Bureau of Census, Washington, D.C., William T. Fay hopped a plane for International Airport, Los Angeles, rented a car and arrived in Yucca Valley.

"We can safely say plans initiated that will assure Yucca Valley the same recognition by the County, and United States Census Bureau as other Hi Desert Communities such as Joshua Tree and 29 Palms," Harold Brown said.

Below Left; People seeking Five Acre Homesteads being sold by Colonel Moore pictured at right. Although the Homestead Act seemed like a blow to the area; it did, in fact, introduce many people to the Valley. Most are now permanent residents.

Joan Wilson Photo



Joan Wilson Photo



PIONEERTOWN

The Old West Lives Again

Dan. Pekarovich Photo





Marge Hamilton Photo

THE PIONEERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.



The Pioneertown Historical Society, Inc. is a non-profit California corporation formed on November 20, 1984, by founding officers Wil Hanson, Billie Reynolds and Constance Walsh.

The following is an excerpt from the Statement of Purpose:

"It is the desire and aim of the Society to inspire our citizens with pride in a community of unusual character in history, architecture and lifestyle . . .

. . . to provide a location for the classification and exhibition of materials pertaining to our history so that they may be accessible for study and enjoyment by the local and visiting public . . .

. . . The Society will collect and preserve memorabilia: personal accounts and photographs, as well as stories, artifacts, photographs and films . . . to preserve the old-west aspects of Mane Street, to encourage restoration of the western structures and usage in a manner appropriate to the town . . . also to encourage that any new construction on Mane Street be in keeping with the established style . . .

. . . The Society will seek to make our history available to all, through the establishment of permanent locations and a permanent museum for the security and display of materials and collections . . .

. . . The Society solicits the membership and enthusiasm of everyone anxious to lend support to the preservation of a still-kicking old-west community."●



Dan. Pekarovich Photo

Pioneertown Post Office, Postmaster Hester Guinan at right with Jim Hester, 1955.



n interesting 922 Post Office is Pioneertown, managed by Postmaster Doreen Thompson. In 1946, a group of movie actors bought and traded railroad property for private property to accumulate 22,000 acres in order to build a movie colony. Business buildings were erected but all had false fronts. "Mane" street in Pioneertown was strictly a horseless carriage street. Western movies were made using the street as a background. Mail, at this time, was picked up in Yucca Valley by anyone who happened to be going there.

The first Pioneertown Postmaster was Alice White (Creswell) and the Post Office measured 10x12 feet. In 1951, Hester Downing Guinan was employed as a replacement clerk and became Postmaster in 1955. Mrs. Guinan remembers many interesting incidents during her first years

as Postmaster. She recalls Gene Autry shooting a picture on one side of the street and Leo Carillo in another on the other side of the same street. Actresses would dash into the Post office to change costumes without realizing the Post office was real and not a part of the set.

As the years passed, the Post Office see-sawed between a 3rd and 4th class office, the motion picture industry became secondary, and people discovered the healthful values of the 4000 foot elevation and dry air.

Doreen Thompson joined the staff at Pioneertown in 1969 and soon learned the requirements of a small busy Post Office. In 1975, when Mrs. Guinan retired, Doreen was the qualified replacement and became the Postmaster. Pioneertown Post Office serves a population of around 500. There is no city delivery so everyone has a Post Office box. Doreen reports a few of her customers still come to pick up their mail on horseback.

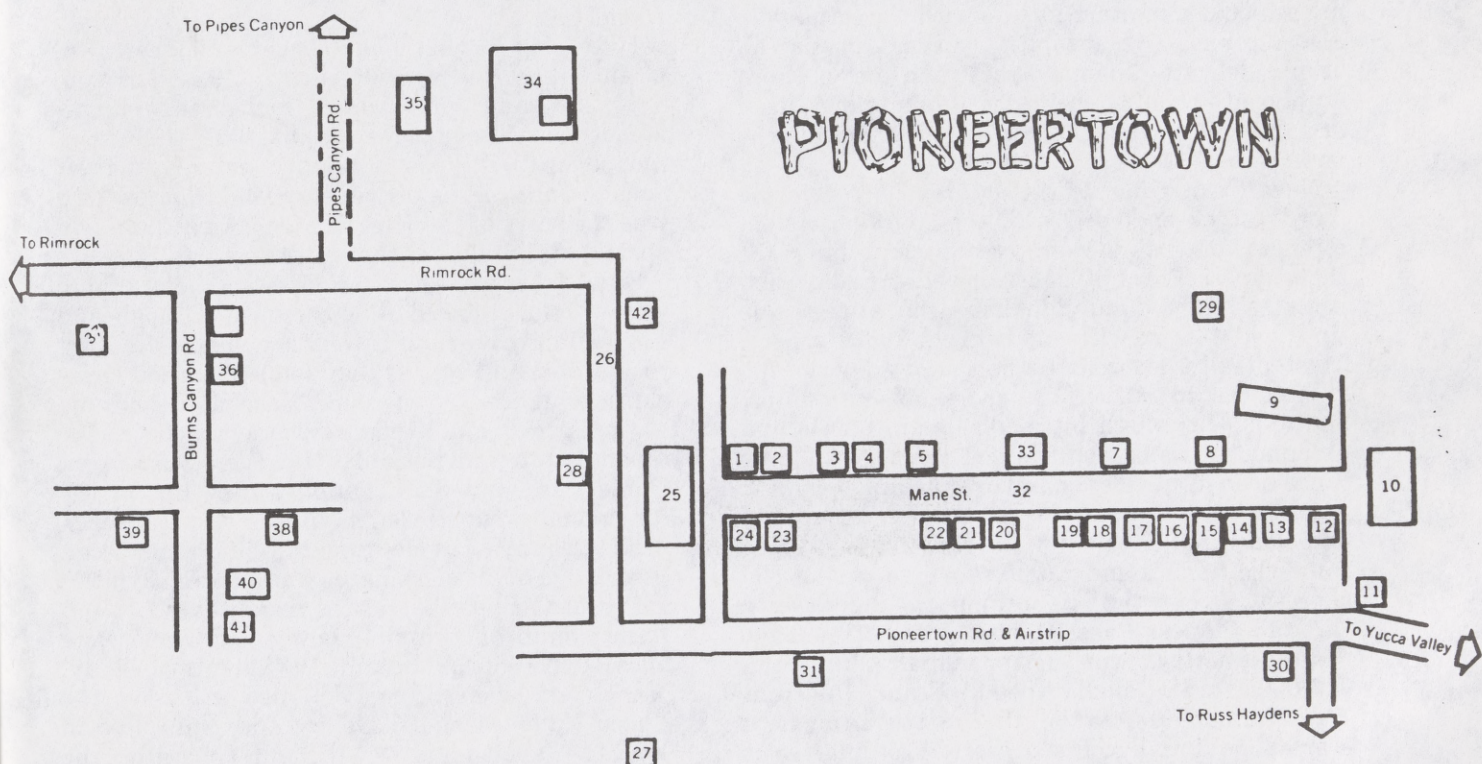
At present time there are 200 mail boxes and Sharon Dickson is relief clerk. ●



Al Lipps

A descriptive shot of Mane Street, Pioneertown taken April 18, 1949.

PIONEERTOWN



1. Maggie's Feed Barn
2. White's Groceries
3. Nell's Ice Cream Parlor
4. Althoff's Furniture Store
5. Wooden Indian
6. Land Office
7. Photo Shop
8. Pioneer Duds & Saddlery
9. Town House
10. Golden Stallion Restaurant
11. Service Station
12. Clip & Curl Beauty Shop
13. Carol Burgess Gift Shop
14. Golden Nugget Coffee Shop — Likker Barn

15. Pioneertown Bowling Alley (First Post Office)
16. Trigger Bill's Shooting Gallery
17. The Sound Stage
18. Honey Fellers Real Estate Office
19. Grubstake Cape
20. Red Dog
21. Ole Barbeque
22. Barber Shop & Beauty Corral
23. Pee Wees Frozen Pantry
24. Fred Marble's Electric Shop
25. Corrals
26. The Old Mormon Trail Leading To Rim Rock & Rose Mine
27. Minna Gombel House — 1947
28. School House

29. Cactus Kate's House (Lil Thompson)
30. Scotty Watt House
31. Colby House
32. Horse Trough
33. Open Air Dance Floor
34. Stud Valley, Site Of First Well & Laund Romat
35. Chicken Ranch — 1939
36. Maggie McDonald's Cabin
37. Mormons House — 1950
38. Vinson House — 1947
39. Burt Cloul (Cloud) House — 1947
40. Rimrock Motel — 1946
41. Dan Pekarovich House
42. Ramsdale House

PIPES COUNTRY



It was as if God decided to preserve one little corner of western greatness or "true grit," if you will, as an inspiration and reminder to all of what can be accomplished if you just stick to it. He set the stage for this continuing drama by creating a perfect geophysical liaison between the rugged mountains and the wide-spreading deserts in a nearly unique area roughly fluctuating from the 3,500 to 4,500 foot elevation mark. He sent down the warming sun, the cooling breezes and occasional snowdrifts to condition the vegetation so it would adapt and meld the magnificent mountain forests with the scrub oak, creosote, sage, manzanita, yuccas, chaparral, athol, delicate Joshua trees and other flora stubbornly existing in the hard-pan, mineralized and rocky crusts and drifting sands of the deserts.

Now it was time for the actors. They must be sturdy stock endowed with the courage, vision, strength and ability to create something for themselves. This, of course, would make each person a "rugged individualist" who, at the same time, had to work with and help out all the others. Most of all they had to be endowed with the willingness to suffer and overcome hardships; and endure through bitter disappointments and reversals. It was a demanding "casting call" but it has been fulfilled over and over again.

As with the rest of the west, the first occupants and itinerant travelers were the Indians. Next came the miners and cattle ranchers taking the short-cut from the mountains to the deserts through Pioneer Pass. It was at this time that "Pipes Country" was just one small part of the 750,000 acre IS Ranch owned by Frank, John and Will Talmadge. As the first settlers/ranchers started moving in to live (in early first quarter of this century) this entire God-gifted area was popularly known as "Pipes Country." It included what is now Pioneertown, Rimrock, Pipes Canyon and Yucca Mesa.

THE INITIAL SETTLERS

The first area to be settled and lived in was Pipes Canyon. Homesteads were filed on by Charlie Reche and Walter Gehre and their families. The Gehres later sold their property to Fred and Barbara Pearce who built and operated a healthy and successful rest home. John Minter was another homesteader who subsequently sold his place to William and Camilla Hudson and their family who were moving up from Warren's

Well way. There was also Stanley Bowden (his "House of Tomorrow" had the only indoor bathroom and a rug on the living room floor), Carl and Nellie Jones, Dorothy Sall, Ruth Duarte, the "Swedes" — John Olson and his Onyx Mine partners, John Kee, Sr., Lem Parsons, Slim and Evelyn Conklin, Ray and Billie Reynolds, Merle Armitage (Gamma Gulch), George and Louise Crawford, May and Harlow Porter, Dorothy Chapman Rash and newcomers (they've only lived here five years) the Ray Mackays.

The oldtimers who settled the eastern portion of "Pipes Country" — now Yucca Mesa — were Will and Sarah Shay, who built the landmark "Windmill;" Ernie Sanders; Frank Bull; and Lionel Sall.

Higher up in what was to become Pioneertown, Grant Allen Kee homesteaded in 1934. His son, John, Sr., and wife, Addah, had already homesteaded in Twentynine Palms, but they soon moved up to "Pipes Country" and raised their sons — John, Jr. "Corky;" Roy; and Charlie. This was the start of the Kee clan which is generously sprinkled throughout the entire area.

Still higher up — in Rimrock — and before there was a place called Pioneertown, Daniel and Louise Pekarovich built their ranch and the Rimrock Motel. In 1945, as they settled in, their three eldest daughters — Florence, Ethel and Gertrude — were grown and lived elsewhere but visited the ranch as often as possible. However, Mary Ann, Daniel, Jr., and Joan happily grew up on the ranch and went through all the local schools. While Danny was at Twentynine Palms High School one of his classmates was a sprightly little gal named Anne. She was the daughter of Leo and Irene Emig, of Sunfair. Danny and Anne were married in 1955 and became the parents of Cindy, Mark, Art and Karen who also attended the Yucca Valley schools. Danny and Anne live in Yucca Valley and own and operate the Pekarovich Construction Grading Co.

Once Pioneertown came into existence it was planned that Rimrock would be strictly a residential community, with the exception of the Rimrock Motel, the only property zoned as a business. Other early Rimrock families were those of Reece and Irene Fox, Jack Duckett, Bert Clow, Ruby and Tom "Pop" Vincent, Red Davidson, Ivan Whiltsie, Martha Foote, Dick and Ruth Bosley, May Small, Bert and Mabel Norman, Fred Moninger and Beverly, Tom McIntosh (the first Sheriff of Pioneertown) and Don Carter.

The land leading up from Yucca Valley to the entrance of Pioneertown was also considered to

be "Pipes Country." The first people to settle in here were Claude Guinan, Rene and Mabel/Mellette, the Boldmans and Harry and Lil Althoff.

In 1948 Bruce and Jean Burns became the proud owners of a half-section of land on Skyline Ranch Road, east of Pioneertown. They built a fine home there. Being nature lovers, they wanted to share a part of their "corner of heaven" with others. So, in 1972, they generously deeded 265 acres to the University of California for research and field trips. Since then six different branches of the university have made good and enjoyable use of the acreage. At the present time university personnel are working on a brochure about the Burns Pinon Ridge Reserve. Its facilities, set up for dry camping, include a fireplace, tables, benches and outhouses. ●



Frank and Mrs. Bull at Bulls Ranch. The Bulls came to Pipe's County in 1933. The Ranch is still in existence although not run by Frank Bull.

Pipes Country seen from the air in the early Forties. Notice the planning that has taken place. Obviously, at this time, no development had taken place.



Dan. Pekarovich Photo

PIONEERTOWN

It was left to Pioneertown and its hint of Hollywood to bring in the investors, the speculators, the fun-loving and the just plain curious in droves. But this was far from the usual buildup for a real estate venture, mainly because the land, the people and especially the situation were entirely different.

To tell its beginnings, as it was told nationwide in January 1950, we will quote, in part, from H. Allen Smith's Saturday Evening Post article, "Just Like A Movie."

"EVEN IN CALIFORNIA, PIONEERTOWN RATES AS SOMETHING SPECIAL. FOR HERE IS AN ENTIRE COMMUNITY — SCHOOLS, SALOONS, DUSTY STREETS — THAT WAS BUILT TO PROVIDE A PERMANENT SET FOR WESTERN MOVIES.

"The San Bernardino Mountains lie 100 miles due east of Los Angeles, fingering down into the hot desert country where movie stars sometimes caper on a Saturday night. Deep within these mountains, on the sloping wall of a canyon that is actually called Rattlesnake Gulch (in Pioneer Pass), lives a storybook sort of hermit named Bill Kramer. He has been there, occupying a comfortable little cabin, for twenty years. His lungs were seared by gas in the first World War and one day in the 1920's an Iowa doctor told him he had only six months to live. Kramer headed west, picked a place where he could die alone, and began building his shack.

"He had a few friends in Southern California and these friends made it possible for him to stay in Rattlesnake Gulch without ever setting foot outside his rugged little valley. At intervals these friends would claw their way to Kramer's place, fetching provisions and books and magazines. He kept a pen of homing pigeons against the possibility of his someday suffering a stroke — he had but to release a pigeon to notify his friends that he was in trouble. He gloried in solitude and led a life of contentment, safe for periods when he took down with a virus common to hermits, and began writing poetry.

"A couple of years ago Bill Kramer's serenity was interrupted by violent activity on the wall of the canyon opposite his hideaway. It sounded as if the prehistoric mastodon and titanotherium had come back to California and were still mad at each other. Kramer investigated and found that small groups of men were blasting and banging a road through the gulch. Occasional visitors to his



Al Lipps

In its heyday the Red Dog attracted a variety of celebrities. Above, Val Jones, standing — shakes hands with John Hamilton in the early fifties.

shack told him that a brand-new town had been started a dozen miles to the southeast in the direction of Yucca Valley and Twentynine Palms. This meant, to Kramer, that civilization with its juke boxes and jeeps and jet-propelled lawn mowers was pushing hard in his direction. The day came, of course, when he could no longer hold his curiosity in check.

"The people of the new community called Pioneertown were astonished, late one afternoon about a year ago, to see a tall gaunt man with hair hanging to his waist appear suddenly at the lower end of their main street. Their astonishment was mild compared with that of the Hermit of Rattlesnake Gulch.

"Before his eyes stood a Western town straight out of the 1880's. The main thoroughfare was wide, unpaved and dusty. Horses stood at hitching racks up and down the street. There wasn't an automobile in sight. A stagecoach drawn by four horses came round a corner and pulled up before the Red Dog Saloon. All the men in view wore cowpuncher clothes and some of them had bushy whiskers and many had guns slung at their hips. And a woman came out of Nell's Ice Cream Parlor wearing a pert sunbonnet and hoopskirts.

Pioneertown today is much the same as when Bill Kramer saw it a year ago. There are more buildings and more people. But if you stand at the head of the long main street you will not likely see a single article that suggests you are living in the middle of the twentieth century. There are no velocipedes in Pioneertown, for even the kids travel on horseback.

"Pioneertown is a huge movie set, with this difference — it was not built to be torn down when the camera crews depart. It is an actual, functioning town, and behind the rustic facades of the saloons and the gambling halls are men and women carrying on businesses just as they carried on in Bucyrus, Ohio.

"The man responsible for Pioneertown is a villainous character named Dick Curtis. He is one of a multitude of Hollywood people whose faces and mannerisms maybe familiar to you, though you probably wouldn't be able to identify them by name. He is a big strapping man with a black mustache, and he has been playing in movies since 1917, when he appeared with Wallace Beery and Blanche Sweet in *The Unpardonable Sin*. On the screen he is usually an unprincipled varmint who shoots noble characters in the back and tries to inflict a fate commonly described as worse than death on any attractive young lady who crosses his evil path. Privately he is a soft-spoken, thoughtful man, given to idealistic dreaming. Pioneertown was one of his dreams.

Dick Curtis, shown below was the founder and President of the Pioneer Town Corporation. This copy of the First Edition of Pioneertown Gazette is from the August 18, 1947 original.

FIRST ★ EDITION

DEDICATED

TO THE FUTURE
GROWTH AND PROSPERITY
OF PIONEERTOWN

PIONEERTOWN GAZETTE

PRICE

ONE OUNCE OF GOLD DUST
OR
5 CENTS—U. S. GOV'T. MONEY

Volume 1, No. 1

PIONEERTOWN, CALIFORNIA

Monday, August 18, 1947

At Press Time

By LYNN C. THOMAS

It was a little more than a year ago that I made my first trip into Pioneertown—and met a man with a dream. It was nearly midnight when I pulled into the ranch that was for so long the headquarters of Pioneertown. A few minutes later, with Dick and Ruth Curtis, I was bouncing across the desert in the little brown Jeep. Dick Curtis was showing me Pioneertown under the soft light of the full desert moon.

He told me his plans and dreams for Pioneertown, and as he talked the darkness of the desert seemed to reach out and grasp those glowing words and the picture took shape and became almost a reality.

That night, a year ago, there wasn't much but open desert here. Today we have a thriving little community. It's a community that your grandfather and mine would have felt at home in, for all of the new residents and businessmen who have come to Pioneertown to settle, have made it possible to make the dream of an old fashioned frontier town come to life. The homes and the business buildings are log cabins and dome and wood and batten construction. The wooden sidewalks, hitching posts and water troughs on Main Street are a realism of this place called Pioneertown.

We have a lot of businesses in town now. And all of these people too, richly deserve the title "pioneers." For they came to our town and invested their money—sometimes their life savings—when Main Street was just a sandy spot cut out of the desert with a bulldozer. Their buildings are up now, and the town is booming. Out of the cities and coastal areas, more

Dick Curtis, President, Pioneertown Corporation

DANNY PEKAROVICH



THE OLD WEST LIVES AGAIN AT UNIQUE PIONEERTOWN

By NICHOLS FIELD WILSON
(Editor Adventures In Business)

Dick Curtis, Hollywood's horse-opera's most hissed at villain, raised up from the saddle, gazed at the scenery, and said, "This is it!"

For Dick, a long search had ended. Here, one-hundred twenty-five miles from Los Angeles, was the perfect setting for outdoor, western pictures. He had discovered the ideal blending of mountain and desert at an elevation of four-thousand feet. Within a distance of a few miles, he beheld scenery reminiscent of the high, flat-top mesas of New Mexico and Utah, the Dakota Badlands, the Colorado Rockies, and the rugged terrain of Arizona.

To Dick Curtis—moviedom's most notorious villain—super deluxe horse-operas and western movie settings were a thing of the past. This villain had bit the dust for the final count. Dick, at forty-four, had retired from the screen to become founder of Pioneertown—America's newest and most unusual city.

Pioneertown is a dream fulfillment to every wild-west adventure lover—a dream Dick was determined to satisfy. Within a few weeks, Dick Curtis had title to 13,000 acres (now 25,000 acres) of pine-studded mountains, sagebrush desert, and swift-running mountain streams. Two months later surveyors, engineers, bulldozers, and jeeps had staked out a community, which, when completed, will be a perfect replica of a wild-west cattle town—with all modern improvements.

Dick and his partners—the screen's leading western personalities—Roy Rogers, Bob Nolan and the Sons of The Pioneers got busy. Within a few weeks, more than three-hundred families had purchased homesites. The news spread. Movie companies sent out scouts to investigate. The Hollywood grapevine buzzed with excitement. Here, in their own backyard, was unsurpassed photogenic scenery which would eliminate costly location companies hundreds of miles from Hollywood.

Dick turned businessman—became a one-man Chamber of Commerce. Hundreds of studio employees—from electricians to elevator operators—placed down payments on lots. Pioneertown was shaping up. With revenue assured from rentals to movie companies, Dick made preparations for 1949—California's centennial.

Tourists arriving in Pioneertown will hear their "clucking" boardwalks as they walk down Main Street. Instead of motor traffic, the buggy, stagecoach, and horse will be the only means of transportation. All Main Street construction will consist of typical "old Western Style" architecture—a Forty-Niners' Heaven with deluxe hotel accommodations.

Famous Writers Tell Story Of Pioneer Town

Some of Hollywood's most famous writers are land owners at Pioneertown, and hence are telling the story of America's most unique community to all the nation.

Listed among those who own property are Hedda Hopper, Lou

With surface water sufficient for more than 20,000 persons, the



Nell's Ice Cream Palace, in use in early 1947.

Marge Hamilton Photo



Some years ago Curtis lent an old lady twenty-five dollars to pay a doctor bill, and when she found herself unable to return the money, she gave him a deed to a few square feet of California sand somewhere north of Los Angeles. After a while Curtis sold the sand lot for a hundred and fifty dollars. He took the money to a Southern Pacific (R.R.) land agent and said, 'Put this in some more sand for me.' The original investment of twenty-five dollars pyramided until the actor awoke one day to the fact that he owned a considerable piece of property somewhere out in the desert. He had never seen it, and he assumed it to be nothing more than a large parcel of solid sand, worthless to anyone but a manufacturer of hour-glasses. So he went out to look at it and had to ride horseback to get to it, and when he did reach it he had his dream . . .

"The property which Dick Curtis had acquired lay in the middle of a natural bowl, completely surrounded by low mountains. The bowl itself is about two miles wide and four miles long, and is 4000 feet above sea level. Thirty miles to the south, at the foot of snowcapped San Jacinto, lies Palm Springs. To the east is the booming resort called Twentynine Palms. Higher in the mountains to the northwest are the lake resorts, Big Bear and Arrowhead.

*Don Kokx with his plane - Circa 1950
The other party is unidentified*



Dick Curtis, being a movie man, was struck by the fact that this land he owned and the land surrounding it contained every variety of scenery needed for exterior shots in the production of cowboy movies, lacking only the Western town. He sat on his horse and visualized such a town set squarely in the middle of the big bowl. He knew that one of the nagging problems in the production of Westerns is the expense of transporting whole companies to location sites — not alone the actors and directors and cameramen but the electricians, the carpenters, the prop men, the extras, the livestock, the costumes. Why not, he said to himself, a real town built in authentic Western style, with most of these essential people living in it, with all the equipment and personnel right on the spot, and even sound stages for interior shooting?

Erla Kokx



"Curtis took his dream back to Hollywood and began talking to his friends in the movie business. Roy Rogers and Gene Autry got interested, and the singing group known as the Sons of the Pioneers, and Bud Abbott and Russell Hayden — known as "Lucky" in the Hopalong Cassidy pictures. Before long, Curtis had seventeen partners, each of whom put up \$500. He formed a corporation and soon had possession of 32,000 acres, encompassing the entire valley. This was in the summer of 1946, and by March of the following year Pioneertown's first building was up.

"The history of Pioneertown since then, brief as it is, has its unhappy side. The town went through a semi-hysterical boom period. Los Angeles real-estate operators took over, hauling busloads of prospects out and selling homesites to them. In order to maintain absolute control over the architecture along the main street, the corporation refused to sell business property, but simply leases it. There was much high-flown talk about how Pioneertown was going to be another Palm Springs, only bigger and better. Before long the original motion-picture-set idea had been submerged and the talk was all of big resort hotels and fancy dude ranches and swimming pools that would be only a foot or two shorter than Lake Erie.



MOUSIE HAYDEN

Russ Hayden, above, and Gene Autrey, right. Two of the Celebrity Land Holders introduced to Pioneertown by Dick Curtis in 1947.



Roy Rogers, front, and the Sons of the Pioneers on the steps of the Land Office in 1947.

"This period of land selling came to an end and left Pioneertown groggy and gasping for breath. Dick Curtis stepped aside and Russell Hayden was elected president of the corporation. (This was in Sept., 1948.) Curtis is no longer active in the management of Pioneertown, though he remains one of the chief stockholders and probably owns more land than anyone else. The latest appraisal of Pioneertown properties shows a value in excess of \$1,500,000, so it is clear that Curtis has parlayed his original dab of sand into a small fortune. He has recently gone into the production end of Western pictures.

"At the time Curtis took his departure, it began to look as if the whole project would end up as another ghost town; there seemed to be no valid reason for anyone sticking around. Efforts to lure the movie people were futile; the producers ignored the natural wonders of Pioneertown and took their location companies to New Mexico or Arizona. Yet the hardier people

Ken Witting Collection

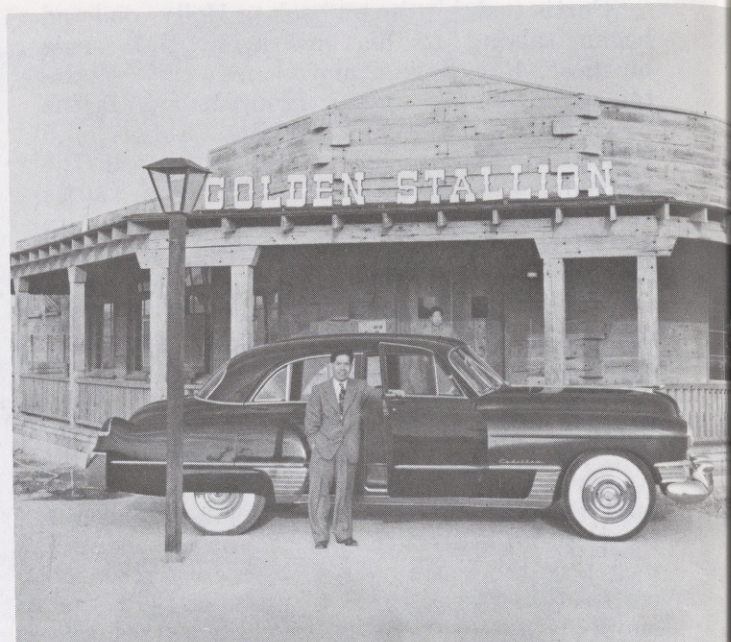


stuck. There was a nucleus of about 200 men and women stubbornly refusing to surrender. Maybe the name for their town suggested it to be, for they began thinking in terms of the 'pioneer spirit.' They fancied themselves as possessing the character and quality of the first Americans who struggled through the mountains to settle the West. They drew themselves together into a tight little community, resolved to stay on, presenting a united front against the mounting hardships. Some of them went on with the work they had started, constructing their own business establishments. One of these was A.E. Thompson. Using his own two hands and with only occasional help from others, he built his spacious and solid-looking bowling resort, timber by timber and nail by nail, even down to the intricate operation of laying the five bowling alleys. 'At least,' he said, 'I'll have something to sit and look at when I get it finished and, anyway, I got nothing else to do.'



Erla Kokx

1949 — Roy Rogers — that Cowboy Feller — who is loved by kids and gals and guys all over the world — picked up a big black ball, took a quick look down the alley, and then fired away. More than 100 spectators weren't disappointed as the first "strike" was registered at the premier opening of Pioneer Bowl. Looking on was Roy's wife, Dale Evans.



Melanson Family Photo

Henry Jew standing in front of his cadillac in front of the newly completed Golden Stallion. Frank Gee is standing at the entrance to the restaurant.

The first restaurant was an old-time Western chuck-wagon. Today at the lower end of the main street stands the Golden Stallion, representing an investment of \$75,000. Up to now I have deliberately refrained from writing down the name of the main thoroughfare; it represents the only shameful deed the pioneers have committed; they christened it Mane Street. The Golden Stallion restaurant building, like many other of the town structures, is walled with old railroad ties cemented together. It was erected by two Chinese from San Francisco, Henry Jew and Frank Gee, who were attracted to Pioneertown by the prospect of its becoming a fashionable playground for people in high priced cars. In the opinion of unprejudiced visitors, no better Chinese food is available anywhere in the United States than at the Golden Stallion. Close by the restaurant is the community's hotel, the Pioneer Townhouse. It, too, is constructed of railroad ties and was designed for possible use as a movie set. Its rooms are comfortable and modern, yet from the outside the long one-story structure has the look of an old-time army barracks. Opposite the hotel is the Pony Express Station — built of 'dobe to conform to its name when viewed from one side; on the other side it becomes the town's filling station.



Melanson Family Photo



Joan Wilson Photo

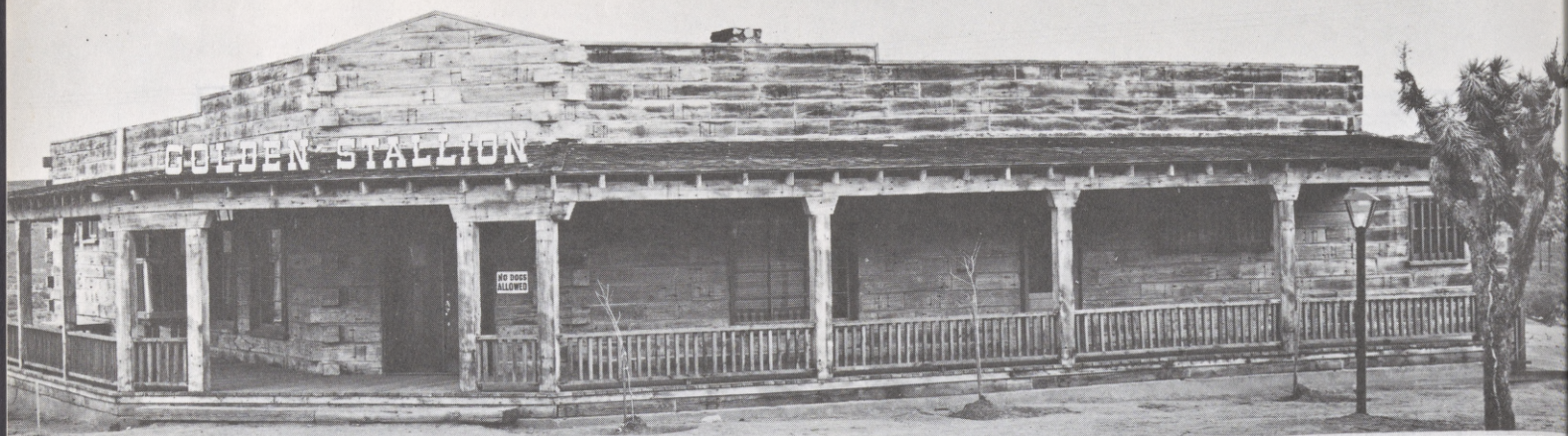
At left; Marilyn Moon and Frank Gee, co-owners of the Golden Stallion, with Henry Jew. At right; the Pioneer-town Gazette where Roy Brown published the paper at an annual subscription rate of \$2.00.

"The broad main street has a line of antique gas lamps extending down its center. The charter of the town corporation forbids the street ever being paved, and signs at either end warn: HORSELESS CARRIAGES AIN'T ALOUD ON MANE STREET. Automobiles and trucks use roadways back of the two rows of business buildings. There are about thirty business structures along the street, and room for thirty or forty more. At the upper end is the community corral — a busy place, since everyone in town has a horse. One modest structure bears the lettering PIONEERTOWN GAZETTE. An Ohio war veteran named Roy Brown edits the paper (Subscription Price Per Year \$2, or One Poke of Gold Dust).

"The eagerness of the townspeople to capture the flavor of the Old West, or rather, the flavor of the West as depicted in the cowboy movie, is reflected in Editor Brown's adventures. Many of the permanent residents have been associated in the past with the production of Western pictures and some of them are ex-actors, and they are all inclined to dramatize the day-by-day life of the town. It is traditional in the horse opera that the newspaper editor is persecuted for taking courageous stands for law and order. Thus we find Editor Brown the central character in impromptu dramatic productions. Whiskered citizens stomp up to him carrying bull-whips and six-shooters, and allow as how he better quit attackin' Black Bart er he'll wake up some mornin' and find his press smashed and his print shop burnt to the ground and hisself atwangin' a harp in heaven.

"Such little scenes are staged for the amusement of the townspeople themselves or again for the edification of tourists and visitors from Los Angeles who swarm in on weekends. There are other noisy doin's, put on for the purpose of startling the tourists, such as a loud lynching in which a realistic dummy is used ("He driv a ottymobeel up Mane Street!). And stagecoach holdups are carried out to the last detail, even to shooting the lock off the iron box containing the gold bullion.

"Occasionally there are real feuds and quarrels, but as a general thing the fraternal feeling of the townspeople is such that they use one another's automobiles and horses without asking permission. If someone gets in trouble, through sickness or other emergency, such as the time Curt Bush's house burned to the ground, the entire town quickly bands together to take care of the situation. During the period of bitterly hard times, nobody went hungry. When there was nothing else to be done the menfolk of the town went out in gangs and worked at building the road which eventually will bring a stream of visitors down through the mountains from Big Bear and Arrowhead. They worked on roads, or helped raise houses, or joined forces to put down the big concrete slab which is used temporarily for open-air dancing on Saturday nights. In time this platform will support an auditorium for the showing of motion pictures and for the use of a Little Theatre group which is already forming in the town. Directly behind the slab is a site marked off for a large swimming pool.



Melanson Family Photo

Pioneertown's "Golden Stallion". It was a typical western structure, built of railroad ties. Strangely it featured some of the best Chinese Cuisine in the entire West.



Ken Witting Collection

Above, shown in a typical Red Dog gathering are L. to R. Shorty Creswell, Harold Church, Cactus Kate, and an unknown figure, being served by Val Jones. Below; Four early Pioneertown figures. They are, L. to R. John List, Frank Gee, Scotty "Jock" McKie, and "Indian George" taken, 1952.

Melanson Family Photo



Nobody in Pioneertown sits around and mopes. There's always a card game going on behind the swinging doors of the Red Dog Saloon, but most of the citizens find other things to do. Some of the men have mining claims out in the hills — the region is rich in minerals, including, some people say, platinum, and including, others insist, uranium; the abandoned Rose Mine, from which \$7,000,000 in gold was taken, is just beyond Bill Kramer's cabin. There is always hunting for deer, bear and quail. The town maintains one of the few troops of mounted Boy Scouts in the country. Social life centers around the activities of the Rawhides, a riding club which organizes weekly horseback expeditions into remote valleys. There is a Jeep Club, and the businessmen have their own organization. The community church is used weekdays as a school, taking children up to the sixth grade.

"There are 'characters' aplenty in and around the town, including two men known only as The Swede and George the Indian, who live in Pipes Canyon and are reputed to have a secret gold deposit back in the hills. They built themselves a nice house of natural stone, which they occupy with an assortment of pigs, chickens and goats, and they usually welcome anyone who stumbles into their neighborhood with a chorus of blasts from a shotgun.

Below; Vi Shade shown in front of the Nickelodeon, Circa — 1950.

Dan Pekarovich Photo





Erla Kokx



Al Lipps

Upper Left; A 1949 Pioneertown gathering in front of the town's first Cafe, the Grubstake Coffee Shop. Upper Right; Al Lipps astride "Dan Boy" in front of the Red Dog Saloon in 1947. Al Lipps was one of the owners of the Red Dog.

"A dozen miles on the opposite side of town lives a bald and bitter little man called Hardrock Harry. He does not shoot at visitors with a shotgun; he uses a rifle. He believes that a fortune in gold lies just below the ground surrounding his shack, and that Los Angeles gangsters have found out about it and are trying to murder him. Having been assured that he shoots only at imaginary enemies and has yet to maim a mortal, I went out by jeep to call on him.

"He sees butterflies," someone told me. 'Be sure and ask him about the butterflies.'

"He came out of his cabin with a bricklayer's hammer in his hand and regarded me with suspicion until I told him I was writing an article for The Saturday Evening Post. He relaxed at once. 'That's who I write for,' he said. When I asked him about his gold, he tightened up again and flickered his eyes around, never looking me in the face, and I wasn't looking him in the face either, but kept my eyes on that long-headed hammer. He pointed to a mound of tailings on the other side of a gully and said, 'I went over there one day and stuck a shovel in them tailings and found out they's a fair amount of the stuff in that pile. About two million dollars, I'd say offhand. You can have it if you want it.' His manner indicated plainly enough that \$2,000,000 was a trifling sum alongside what he had on his side of the gully. Finally I asked him about butterflies.

Imagine living in an old Western town like Pioneertown. Scenes like the one shown below in 1947 were a daily happening.

Joan Wilson Photo



Erla Kokx

Above; the Pioneertown Townhouse in the late Forties. The Townhouse, like the Golden Stallion, was built of Railroad ties. Below; preparing to install a Western style sign, so typical of Pioneertown in the early years. Automobiles were not allowed on Mane Street. Every effort was made to keep the town as Western as possible.

DANNY PEKAROVICH



"'You missed 'em by two days,' he said. 'They come through on Friday goin' north. Millions. Trillions. Skillions! All the same kind and all the same size. You couldn't see the mountains for the butterflies. Each one flies zigzag and the ones up ahead use a telegraph system to tell the ones behind how to fly. Two hours it took 'em to pass here and they camped overnight in a field up around that hill yonder.' I didn't dispute him about the butterflies, though other people said they had never seen more than six, or maybe eight, butterflies together at any one time.

"Pioneertown's future appeared quite hopeless in the summer of 1948 when Philip K. Krasne, a Nebraska-born lawyer turned movie producer, arrived for a week end. Krasne is boss of the company which turns out the Cisco Kid pictures, starring Duncan Renaldo and Leo Carrillo. The producers of low budget Westerns have been aptly described as the true geniuses of Hollywood; their schedule requires that actual shooting of a picture take no more than seven or eight days. There must be no delays, no slipups, and nothing short of death ever halts production. A delay of a single day can almost obliterate the producer's profit, so absolute co-ordination of effort is essential. Every conceivable emergency must be anticipated. Just recently a company on location in New Mexico recruited a band of real Indians for a raid on a wagon train. At the last minute it was discovered that the Indians knew nothing of the uses of the bow and arrow. An expert archer had to be called in to show them how to hold the bow, how to draw the string and how to release the arrow. A detail had been overlooked and an entire day was wasted.

Who can forget "The Cisco Kid", one of the first movies shot in Pioneertown. The two stars are shown above. Duncan Renaldo, left and the ever popular "Cisco" Leo Carrillo. They're surrounded by the area's Joshua Trees.

Dan. Pekarovich Photo



Al Lipps

Scenes like this one convinced Philip Krasne that Pioneertown was indeed, the ideal "Western Set". In the summer of 1948, the Cisco Kid was shot here.

"Krasne knew what Dick Curtis had known — that one of the major expenses comes from the necessity of transporting an entire company from Hollywood to location sites. He looked at Pioneertown itself and found it perfect. And the variety of spectacular scenery, all contained within the valley, was even more impressive. By car, by jeep, on horseback and afoot, he and Renaldo scouted the eighty square miles belonging to the Pioneertown Corporation. They found forests of Joshua Trees and forests of pine; there were desert vistas that might have been lifted right out of Death Valley, and willow-lined river beds, and tableland covered with cactus and sagebrush and, more important than all else, rock. Mountains peaks and cliffs and chasms and canyons, and sweeping hillsides strewn with immense boulders.

"One day of inspection convinced Krasne. He not only arranged for the production of future Cisco Kid pictures in and around Pioneertown; he acquired the movie rights to the entire area. And then built a sound stage on the main street — it is disguised behind a sign which says, Hay, Grain & Feed. After that, Krasne formed a separate company which rents out all these production facilities to other producers.

"Up until this last summer only two pictures had been produced in Pioneertown. Krasne made one and Gene Autry made one. However, business was picking up on the day that I arrived in town. Already on the job was a company from Columbia Pictures, shooting a serial about the pony express. Krasne and Renaldo had come out from Hollywood to scout locations for their next Cisco Kid production; they planned to start shooting the day the Columbia unit finished. That same morning Niven Busch drove in with a group of technicians, looking for a place to film a picture Busch had written and which he planned to produce as in independent, with his wife, Teresa Wright, as star. Busch arrived in town openly skeptical; by evening he was demanding, 'Why the hell didn't somebody tell me about this?' He signed up.



Pioneertown can prosper from this sort of activity. Each company brings in from 50 to 150 persons. They must be fed and housed and entertained. If, as is strongly indicated, the producers of Westerns begin using the location regularly, then the influx of tourists will increase. Highway 99, one of the principal auto routes through the Southwest, passes twenty-five miles to the south and a paved road branches off to the town. Already at that turn-off a sign has been erected: PIONEERTOWN — THISAWAY.

"The major difficulty at the moment is that of working out an arrangement with the labor unions in the film industry, an arrangement under which almost all of the key personnel needed in the production of a Western would live right in Pioneertown. Producer Krasne foresees the day, not far distant, when everybody in town will be available to work as an extra, and when the permanent residents will include electricians, carpenters, bit players, set dressers, wranglers, and all the other specialized workers needed to turn out a picture. Right now Jack Benton, who writes the screen plays for the Cisco Kid pictures, is building himself a ranchhouse on the edge of town and has become a permanent resident. There are a number of carpenters and electricians with union cards living in the town, and a handful of union-qualified extras. Even with this small beginning, Krasne estimates that he has cut the production cost of a picture by about \$30,000 — meaning that actual shooting takes about three days less than it would elsewhere. This saving, of course, would be considerably greater if he had, say, 80 per cent of the personnel living in the town.

Part of the daily shooting in Pioneertown in 1948. Many of Westerns shown on late night T.V. were shot in Pioneertown.

DANNY PEKAROVICH



Ken Witting Collection

Anyone old enough to remember the Golden Years of films will remember the face of Jack Lunden, above. One of Pioneertown's early figures.

"The pioneers of Pioneertown, then, are once again talking about prosperity. For a while they all but forgot the dream that Dick Curtis had — the dream of a town styled for the production of Western movies. They lost themselves in visions of bigger things — the idea that their community would become a playground for the spenders from Beverly Hills and Park Avenue. Now they are back on the original beam, and so thoroughly pleased with the way things are going that they wouldn't bat an eye if a zillion butterflies came zigzagging up Mane Street headed for Hardrock Harry's place in the hills."

THERE WAS A BUSINESS BOOM!

In the hey-dey of its first bursting growth and then the film-making era there were 34 businesses up and down Mane Street. The first building, in 1947, was, of course, the Pioneertown Corp's Land Office. The second business was the Red Dog Saloon. It was owned by Al Lipps and Don Kokx and was built for \$6,500 by Bill Wolfe, contractor; his brother, Rick, and friends. When they first came to look over the possibilities, Al and Don each landed his own Taylor Craft airplane on Mane Street and walked over to the Land Office.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

The Red Dogs "Face on the Barroom Floor". It was done by Don Imus in the late Forties.



KENDALL STONE

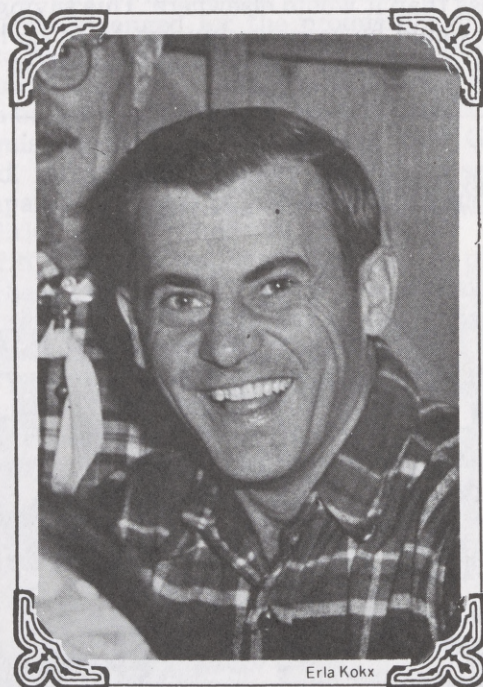
Above; the Sherriffs Posse at the Bar of the Red Dog. Below; one of the Mane Street business establishments in the late Forties. It was the Frosted Pantry owned by Pee Wee Toal.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

Al advertised that on opening day the beer would be free. Everyone in the high desert came to drink the beer and look over the rustic, western barroom with sawdust on the floor except one spot reserved for the painting of "The Face On The Barroom Floor." The open house beer drinking went on all day and all night until, exhausted, Al and Don closed the doors. Through the years scads of people from all over came to enjoy the beer, the food and the fun. On one memorable occasion the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Mounted Posse, en masse, rode their horses into the Red Dog and right up to the long bar. Whisky with an oats chaser??

Later the SPS Construction Co. took over on the old western front buildings, many of which were being constructed simultaneously. Other businesses built and operated on Mane Street were: Cecil, the Barber; The Golden Stallion; Pioneer Duds & Saddlery; Pioneer Bowl; Pony Express Service; The Grubstake Cafe; Maggie's Feed Barn; Desert Poultry Farm; White's Grocery; The New Sports Barn; Klip 'n Kurl Beauty Shop; Marble Electric Shop; Pioneer Trailer Court; The Arcade; Pioneertown Furniture; The Frosted Pantry; The Feed Bag; Pioneer Drafting Service; Pioneertown Painters; Trigger Bill's Shootin' Gallery; Pioneertown Gazette; The Barbecue Corral; The Gold Nugget Coffee Shop; Pioneertown Photo Shop; The Townhouse Motel; The Wooden Indian; Nickelodeon; Likker Barn; The Gem Trader; Nell's Ice Cream Palace; and Honey Fellers' Real Estate Office.



Erla Kokx

Don Kokx Co-Owner of the Red Dog.



othing was as it seemed to the naked eye, but one of the more spectacular successes was the railroad tie Townhouse Motel fashioned to look like an authentic western stage stop. Also, Fred Marble's little building next to the Toal's became, in later years, the most photographed Post Office in the world. With Hester Guinan as Postmaster.

When the corporation's publicity campaign, on behalf of the movie-making potential, was going at full throttle one group in particular was given special attention — the members of the Hollywood press. And, as it turned out the first recorded home-site property owners were Hedda Hopper, Louella Parsons, Jimmy Fidler, Erskine Johnson, Jimmy Starr and Art Baker (of Los Angeles Radio Station KFI).

Many others connected with the motion picture industry also bought property, but the only one who built a house and lived in Pioneertown (other than the original corporation principals) was Broadway actress Minna Gombell, who had come to California to appear in the play, "Nancy's Private Affairs" at the El Captain Theatre. Her agents actually had to argue her into trying out for the movies while she was here! The camera soon proved that her blond beauty matched her acting talents and she was soon in "Pagan Love Song," with Esther Williams; "Here Comes The Groom," with Bing Crosby; "The Merry Widow," with Maurice Chevalier; "Boom Town," with Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy; and many, many other films.

She and her business parter, De Churchill, were very interested in the Pioneertown idea and bought one of the acre-and-a-quarter home-sites. De Churchill designed the whole split-level house with lots of big picture windows. She also was the overseer of the entire construction project.

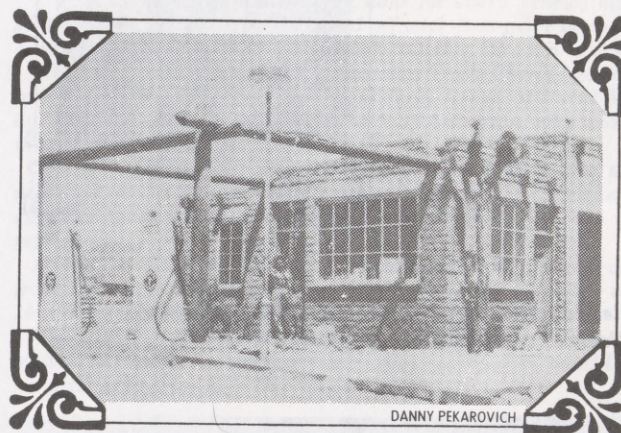
Despite their love for Pioneertown their work forced them to move back to Beverly Hills, but they returned to their beloved little house often and drank in the magnificent view of the surrounding hills and mountains.

When Margie Hamilton first arrived on the scene she was Mrs. Frank Mattoon. She was a nurse at the Good Samaritan Hospital, in Los Angeles. Frank was a diesel engineer for the Standard Oil Co., in Arabia. He had been gassed in an industrial accident and sent back to the states for treatment. He was her patient in the hospital and when he was released they were married and came up to what became Pioneer-town for lots of fresh, pure air in his lungs. They bought a ranch and, to make a living, raised chickens. By 1940 they had 3,000 laying Leghorns that produced at least 2,800 eggs per day. Marge said they had to gather the eggs three



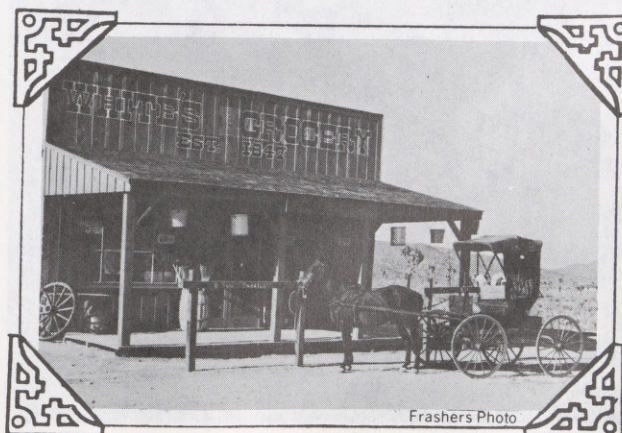
DANNY PEKAROVICH

The Likker Barn was a Mane Street business that enjoyed considerable success. Most early residents went everywhere on horseback.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

In the late Forties it was the "Pony Express" service station, above. It's now known as the Palace. Below; Whites Grocery tried to convey age with the 1847 sign. The year was actually a Century later.



Frashers Photo



Marge Hamilton Photo

Marge Hamilton around 1940.



Ken Witting

Above: Rex Hamilton and a Big one that didn't get away.
Below: Pioneertown School during the 1947-48 term.



times a day. They were all set up with an egg-room, candler, weigher, inspection area and cooler. They sold and delivered the very fresh eggs to the Bagley Store in the Twentynine Palms Plaza; the Lilley Grocery Store in Yucca Valley; and to stores in Joshua Tree; Palm Springs; Cathedral City; Whitewater; and Banning. "Never a dull moment," she said.

She and Frank were good friends of Dick Curtis and his wife, Ruth.

Marge's daughter, Lois Elaine, rode her horse to the old Yucca Valley schoolhouse every day. A distance of 20 miles round trip. She and her horse also did some trick riding with the Sons of the Pioneers in some of the films. "But we discouraged her," said Marge, thinking of how wild the Hollywood scene could get.

When Lois went to Twentynine Palms High School they bought her a little Plymouth. She not only drove to the campus, but delivered eggs to customers enroute.

Frank died in 1948 and Marge continued on at the ranch, raising chickens. John Hamilton, who had been a Bakersfield police officer for 20 years, retired and moved to Yucca Valley to join his brother, Rex, another retired police officer married to the former Cathy Heard. He met Margie there and they were soon married. Back at the ranch chickens began to fade out and horses became the prime interest. John was in many of the Pioneertown westerns. Margie never wanted to be in any of them, but she rode up on her horse and, sitting comfortably in the saddle,

Marge Hamilton on a prize bull. This part of her life came after marrying John Hamilton. Little by little, the chicken ranch was phased out. Circa — 1948.

Marge Hamilton Photo



watched them shoot the movie. John also rented seven of his horses to the film companies and was especially fond of remembering one picture which used one of his mares and her brand new colt in the story line.

John was always interested in all things equestrian. He helped start the Rawhide Riding Club, believed to be the first mounted Boy Scout troop in the United States. Dick Curtis was the president and sponsor. The charter members included Royal Low, Harry Schaad, Hilton Johnson, Harry Newton, Morris Remillard, Rodger Whiltsie, Edward Moon, Duane Lipps, John "Dusty" Coots, Danny Pekarovich, Roy Kee, George Sinclair, Charles Kee, David Duarte, George White, Richard Bosley and Joe Tunstall.

John was also the charter president of Equestrian Trails Corral 46; ETI State Director for Pioneertown; started the Dusty Trail Riders; and was most instrumental in having Pioneertown as the scene of the 11th Annual State Ride and Convention in 1959. And he was the winner of the Marathon Ride which benefitted the Hi-Desert Memorial Hospital Building Fund Drive.

1980 was a very bad year for Marge. Her daughter, Lois, was killed in an automobile accident two weeks after John had died. But, true to her pioneering spirit, she has persevered and stays on at the ranch, which is now managed by a caretaker. She enjoys visiting with her friends and keeps in close touch with her granddaughter, Priscilla Newberry, who is married to an Army sergeant stationed at Ford Ord., California.

Below is the Rawhide Riding Club organized by John Hamilton. This is believed to be the first Mounted Boy Scout Troop in the U.S.

DANNY PEKAROVICH



Ken Witting

Above; one of the equestrian trails rides arriving in Pioneertown. The girl second from the left is Judy Wise, 13 years old. She and her Grandmother rode from Hayward, Calif. Circa — 1948.

John Hamilton rode an hour for every year of his age during the Horsemen's Marathon and walked off with first-prize money of \$300 after 62 hours and six minutes on a horseback ride that set a world's record.

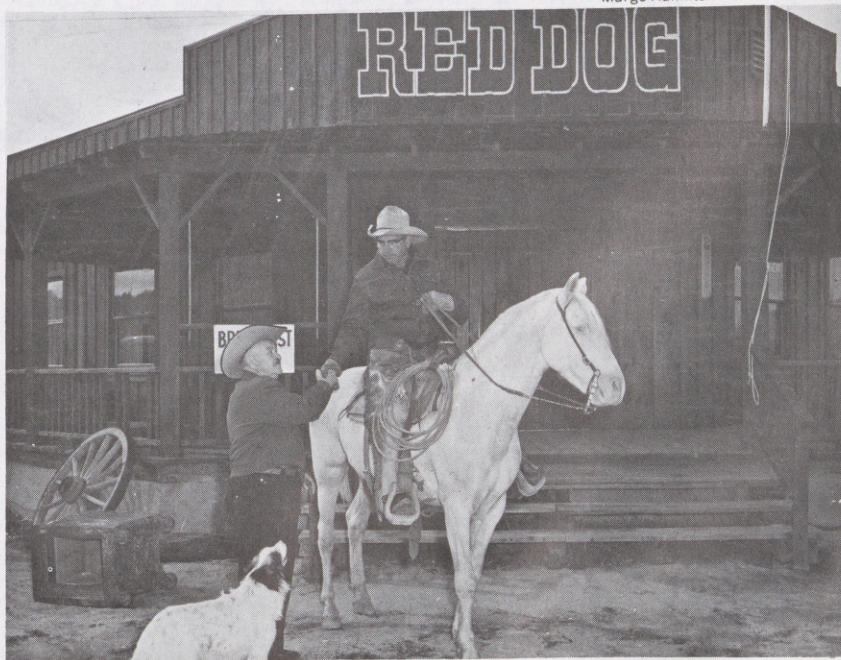
Hamilton, president of the Equestrian Trails Corral No. 46 and a man long in the saddle, had competition from Jerry Reese, of Burnt Mt., who dropped out after 55 hours, and Bill Hornbeck of Arlington, who won \$100 third-prize money.

The ride, which got under way at 8 p.m. Dec. 12 ranged up and down and over and across Yucca Valley's riding trails for the next two and a half days. Riders were given 15 minutes every four hours to change saddles and take refreshment.

Of the 13 riders who started the event all were men except one. Mae Schlegel from Cabazon, who was sponsored by the Ross Saddlery of Palm Springs. Hamilton carried the tag of the Red Dog Saloon on his back.

The ride was the first in what is expected to be an annual event in Yucca Valley. It was part of the many activities during the Round Up of Stars for the hospital fund drive held Dec. 12-14.

Marge Hamilton Photo



Al and Laura Lipps sold their part of the original Red Dog to Val Jones in 1950, and moved to Santa Ana where he operated a private bus service. When he retired they moved into Leisure World, Laguna Hills, but the desert was too strong a lure and they now live in Cathedral City. While reminiscing about those early days in Pioneertown, Al told of the time there was a heavy advertising campaign on the radio and in the newspapers. There were not enough accommodations for the hundreds of people who came up to see the land and the movie people in action. A customer told Al one morning that he couldn't find any place to stay the night before. So he slept on the ground — after removing his outer clothing to save wrinkles. In the morning he stood right up to put on his clothes, thinking he was the only one out there in the open. Instead, he saw dozens of heads popping up all over as all the rest of the "no-more-roomers" sat up and saw him hurriedly dressing. Al said the town consistently bulged at the seams on weekends during this period and that the overflow people "spruced up" in a big galvanized washtub.

THERE WAS ALWAYS LOTS OF
FUN AND LAUGHTER



Dazzlin' Dallas Morley

PIONEERTOWN Echoes From The Past

1948 — Pony Express is near completion, George Sinclair, who Sinclair built by himself. Signal oil products will be sold.

1948 — Pioneertown Rawhides won First Prize as the group, "Most Typical of the Desert" in the Palm Springs Circus Parade.

April 1949 — Roy Rogers "King of the Cowboys, Rolls First Ball at Pioneer Bowl." With him was his wife Dale Evans and his daughter Linda.



Anyone who ever paid Pioneertown a visit in those good old days remembers it with love and longing. No one could stay in a bad mood because there was always lots of fun and laughter. The bowling alley, later purchased by Gladys and Ron Young, was always active with cowpoke-actor-bowlers and crew members loosening up after a fast, full day of shooting. And, people from Pioneertown and all the neighboring communities bowled in leagues on the alleys decorated with western movie art. There was always a lot of good natured joking going on which kept 'em laughing and the blues on the run.

And then there was "Dazzlin' Dallas" Morley who played the piano in authentic western movie barroom style. They loved her and people came from miles around to hear her entertain at the Red Dog, the Golden Stallion, the Cantina and at Hayden's Ranch in Pioneertown. Dallas said, "I never stayed on one job in one place more than three months at a time, and in some towns I had numerous jobs, others were short engagements." Wherever she was in her thirty-five years as a professional musician she was always called back again and again by popular demand. When Owen Petrie bought the Red Dog he completely remodeled the rough-hewn interior, converting it into a fancier turn-of-the-century bar and restaurant. Dallas, who is also a very accomplished dressmaker, made all of her own Gay 90's hats and costumes to match the decor.

She played to additional crowds in Yucca Valley at Bouchey's, Callahan's, the Glen, Bonanza, the Elks Lodge and the Stein Room; in Yucca Mesa at the Longhorn Tavern; in Landers at the Golden Slipper, Castle Inn, Valley of the Moon, Desert Room, Doberman's Den and the Moose Lodge; in Lucerne Valley at Smokey's; in Joshua Tree at the Hi-Ho, Starlight, Jeb's, Early Bird, Cactus 2, Stardust, Boom-Boom Room and Louie's Shack; in Smoke Tree at the New Josh; in Twentynine Palms at the Round Up Room, Sam's Character Room, Old Josh Lounge, P.J.'s Ranch House, Tahiti Reef and the Marine Base NCO Club; in Wonder Valley at the Meeting Place; on the Morongo Grade at the Old Buckskin Club (through seven names and seven owners); and in Morongo Valley at the Patio Cafe, Old Morongo Inn and the Moose Lodge.

In the low desert she played in Desert Hot Springs at Tiki's, Alibi, Oasis, Escapade, Spa, Elbow Room and the Moose Lodge; in North Palm Springs at the Pleasure Inn and Melody Lane; in Palm Springs at Amado, Wagon Wheel, Doll House, Palm House, Del Taquitz, Father's, Dunes, Bombay, Chi-Chi; in Cathedral City at Carol's Club Rainbow Room, Tampico, Zak's, Bill of Fare, Maria's, His 'n Hers, Palm Room; in



DANNY PEKAROVICH

Rancho Mirage at the Falcon; and in Indio at the Date Room and the Oasis Room. Years back she also played at a restaurant in Palm Desert "but I can't remember the name."

In between she said, she played at Pancho Barne's Dude Ranch, in Hollywood; in New Orleans; Las Vegas, Reno, Virginia City and Beatty, Nev.; Phoenix, Coolidge and Piccacho, Ariz.; Albuquerque, N.M.; and in Mexico. Elsewhere in California she had provided lots of musical entertainment for people in Brea, Placentia, Anaheim, Burbank, Tarzana, Studio City, Chatsworth, Van Nuys, Bel Aire Country Club, Pinyon Pines, Anza, Costa Mesa, San Clemente, Barstow and Stockton.

Back to Pioneertown and its specialized entertainment. There were trick riding and roping exhibitions, shoot-outs, hold-ups, horseback chases, captures, short kangaroo court trials and lynchings so realistic they made those first spectators really flinch. The first "victim" of a clockwork, fake lynching was Shorty Creswell who had red hair and a red beard and pinch-hit as the Bearded Lady in some of the other skits and stunts.

There were horse shows, gymkhanas, liars' contests and all kinds of wild skits. The public could participate in trail rides, hay rides, breakfast rides, picnic rides ("Cowboy bring gal. Gal bring box lunch. Follow signs.") and open air dancing out under the full moon and the stars. All of this done while taking advantage of the wonderfully healthy climate. If the weather misbehaved there were snow-ball fights. In Aug., 1965 the Big Bear Wild Burro Races started in Pioneertown and went back up the "back way" through Lucerne Valley. For days before, during and after the race Pioneertown turned itself inside out with an enormous schedule of special events.

And, back to the regular schedule of course the spectators could always watch the movies being filmed — as long as they stayed out of the camera's view.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

In its Heyday, Pioneertown was a fun place, as these photos indicate. Upper left, the Korny Karnival Players. L. to R. Blondie Edwards, Zeke Eckelberger, J.C. Eisenbruch, Eloise Jeffries, Shorty Creswell and Jim Althoff. The year, 1948. Upper Right; the fake lynchings were a weekly part of the show. Below; Shorty Creswell and Cactus Kate. Both part of many shows for the tourists.

DANNY PEKAROVICH





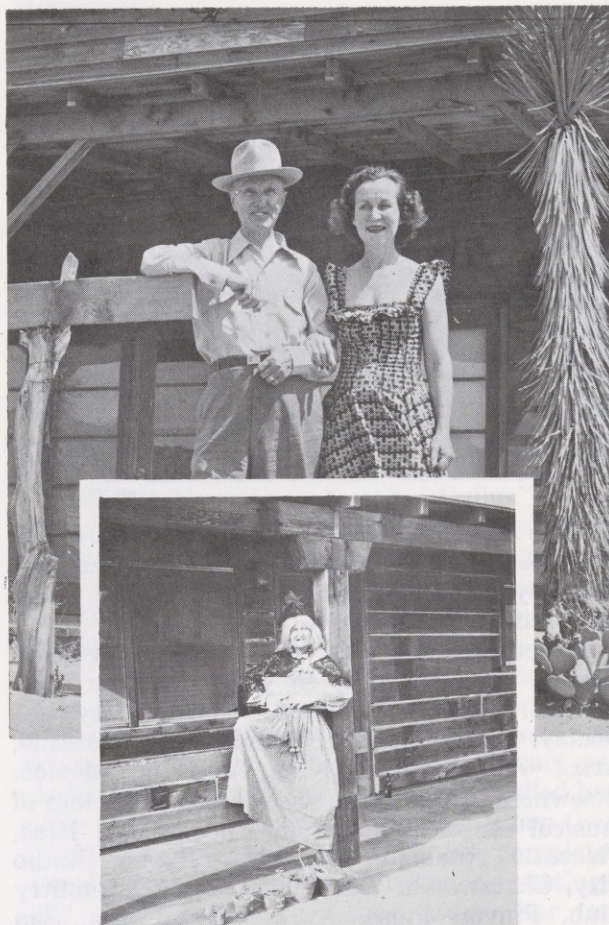
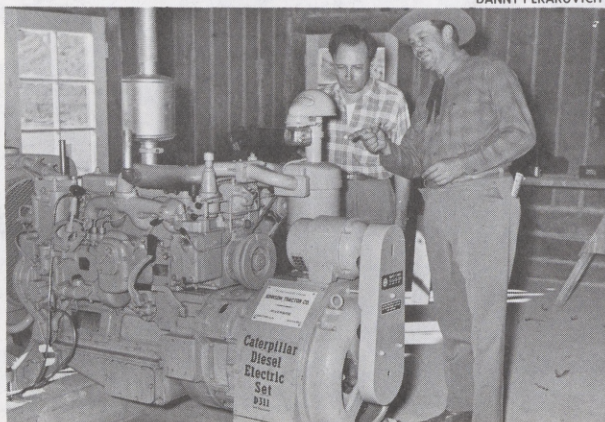
In that first building burst for Pioneertown Village and Rimrock, the corporation put in an enormous lighting plant operated by Leonard Wikoff, chief engineer for Pioneertown Utilities. Everyone soon learned to love the mechanized chugging of the light plant and its unique street lamps which, alas, were replaced by brighter midway-type lights when Cal Electric brought electricity up from Yucca Valley in 1948.

In addition, wells were dug and water pipeline laid out. The residential roads leading away from the Mane Street nucleus were all given movie star and western flavor names such as Gunsight, Red Rider, Pony Express and Dick Curtis Roads; Frontier, Rawhide and Roy Rogers Trails; Tom Mix Drive; and Minna Gombell Lane.

Homes began going up on these colorful roads. Some of them were being built on weekends only by the weekender-owners. There was just one small problem — the only shower in town was at the Red Dog. After their long hours of construction work they all wanted a shower before going on to dinner and the proverbial dance. The lines of soap-and-towel-toting bathers were just about as long as Mane Street.

Tommy Thompson and his wife, Lillian (Cactus Kate), built the Pioneer Bowling Alley and fixed a place up in back for use as the Post Office. Their daughter, Alice White, became the first Postmaster. Roy Rogers rolled the first bowling ball down the alley at the opening.

When electricity came to Pioneertown it was via the generator shown in this picture. It was operated by Leonard Wikoff, Chief Engineer, and overseen by Dick Curtis, founder of Pioneertown. Then, in 1948 Cal Electric brought electricity up from Yucca Valley.



The picture above is of Harold Church and Cactus Kate as she was, out of character. The inset is Cactus Kate as seen on almost any weekend in the late Forties.

Ralph Kingston had moved out to Yucca Valley from the San Fernando Valley. He and Bill "Frenchy" French knew there were going to be many westerns filmed in Pioneertown. They went in to Hollywood and each got Screen Actors' Guild and Screen Extras Guild cards so they would be able to work in the films — a small detail too many disappointed locals overlooked. Ralph and "Frenchy" were in the "Wild Bill Hickock" and "Annie Oakley" films up in Big Bear. They went to work on location in Chatsworth for Gene Autry and Flying A Productions. When they returned to Pioneertown they worked in many, many films. Ralph said it was a common occurrence in westerns but he always got a kick telling about one film in which he did the narration; rode out of town fast with the black-hat-bad-guys-outlaws; chased himself as one of the white-hat-good-guys-posse members; waved goodbye to the townspeople as a stagecoach cowboy riding shotgun; and waved back to himself as one of the crowd seeing the stagecoach off at the end of the picture. He did everything but sell popcorn!



MOUSIE HAYDEN

Before Pioneertown fell upon lean years, scenes like the one above were a daily part of life in town. The scene above was shot from an interior set of the "Judge Roy Bean" series. Many will recognize Edgar Buchanan on the left. His was a familiar face on the silver screen for many years. Others in this scene are Chris Angell, Sandra Hayden, Tris Coffen and Jackie Loughery. — Many of us hope that the Golden Years of Pioneertown have yet to be experienced.

Everything was going great and then, for reasons still pondered, the bubble burst. The party, which was so much fun for the townspeople and the tourists, was over. Russ "Lucky" Hayden became the corporation's president and general manager. He had shared Dick Curtis' dream and the belief that Pioneertown, which was smog and overhead-airplane free, was the answer for western movie producers. His fellow officers were Frank McDonald, 1st vice president; Ralph Sanford, 2nd vice president; Julie Jane Carr, secretary; Don Kokx, treasurer; and J.G. Moser, general counsel. The co-founders were Tim Spencer, Harry Schaad, Ralph W. O'Neill, Roy Rogers, Ken Carson, Thomas Carr, Tom London, Jerry Stanley, George Fisher, Philo J. Harvey and, as The Sons of the Pioneers — Bob Nolan, Tim Spencer, Lloyd Perriman, Pat Brady, Karl Farr and Hugh Farr.

Russ tried valiantly to keep it going and solve some of the problems. Despite published words of encouragement from Gene Autry, some of the people panicked and pulled up stakes. However, a heartening number of them stayed and were as

determined as "Lucky" to ride out and endure the storm. True grit.

One of the things Russ thought would be good for Pioneertown and everyone else in the mountains and deserts was a project to widen the former 27-mile mining and cattle-drive trail through Pioneer Pass to Big Bear. In 1973, when he was being interviewed by Allen Ward, publicity chairman of the Pioneer Pass Golf Challenge, he remembered those years. He had envisioned travelers from Palm Springs and other desert communities passing through Pioneertown on their way to the mountains over one of the most picturesque roads in the west. "It was no great shakes of a road," he recalled. "And we couldn't expect dainty city folk to make the trip unless the road was fixed up. We took our story to the County Board of Supervisors, innocently expecting them to pony up the funds for improving the road. I guess they thought we were just a bunch of crazy actors, looking for a free ride to Big Bear. We didn't get it!"

Unlike others before him who had been turned down, Russ and his associates took matters into their own hands. Seventy-five thousand dollars of corporate funds were poured into the tortuous trail up Pioneer Pass. "In those days you could blast a lot of rock with \$75,000, but even so we couldn't do much more than take out some of the thank-you-ma'ams and straighten a few hairpin turns," Russ said.

No one tried harder to give continued life to the dream of Pioneertown than Russ "Lucky" Hayden and friends like Jackie Coogan. It was just not to be — at least, for now.

MOUSIE HAYDEN





DANNY PEKAROVICH

Three views of Pioneertown give a graphic demonstration of the town's growth. Upper left; an aerial view of Pi-Town taken by Willie Boldizar in early 1947 — Upper right; Pioneertown under construction. The photo was taken in 1948, again by Willie Boldizar. Below, right; Pioneertown after it was established. From this view it's easy to see why so many people were excited about the town's possibilities for Western Movies.

Of more immediate need was the meandering road between Yucca Valley and Pioneertown. Another trip to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. Again the county turned down his request for a shorter and better road needed to connect his still functioning motion picture colony to the highway and Los Angeles.

"I carried dynamite up from San Bernardino in my own car," Russ stated, "sort of a thrill ride for me, and we just laid a road to our own liking. When we finished it, the County took a liking to it, too; paved it and took over the maintenance. I was glad to be rid of it because I never saw so much rock hauled in all my life as when we were cutting it through!"

After the county acquired the Pioneertown road there was a real celebration. And what a celebration! Tommy Thompson, as president of the Pioneertown Businessmens' Association, had been instrumental in getting the county's cooperation. He gave a sixteen-hour party at his bowling alley for the work crews and all the local citizens "in honor of a county highway through town."



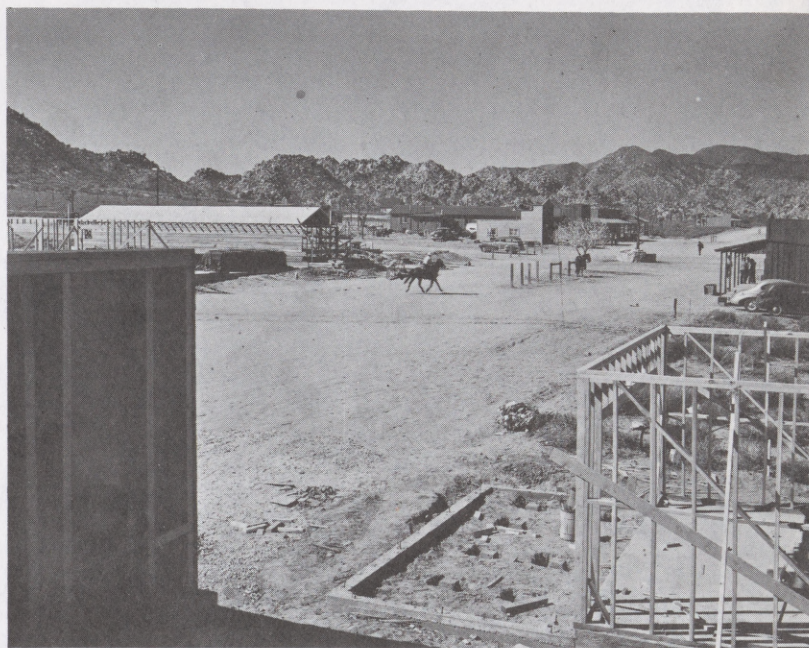
DANNY PEKAROVICH

DANNY PEKAROVICH





DANNY PEKAROVICH



DANNY PEKAROVICH

Upper left; the watering trough, and signposts built by Johnnie Key around 1948. Note its location in photo, upper right. Obviously, Pioneer town is still in construction. in this 1949 photo. Bottom; Gene Autry and Champion. When this photo was taken Gene had just spent two months in Pioneer town, in both work and enjoyment.



Russ told Allen, that he had spent most of his time in building up the Pioneer town facilities for motion pictures and found time to appear in many of them in the popular cowpoke roles. When he succeeded in selling the Judge Roy Bean series to television in 1955, he built a faithful reproduction of Langtry, Texas, on his own acreage south of town. There he continued his lifelong hobby of collecting artifacts and equipment of the Old West. They were in daily use as movie props and included wagons, mining machinery, tools, costumes, livery, weapons and household furnishings galore. The collection was stored in the jumbled disarray common to prop rooms everywhere.

He also started plans for a museum of the old west and an amphitheatre on his own Pioneer town ranch.

No story about Russ would be complete without mention of Mousie, his wife, who isn't mousie at all. "You're a cute little mouse," Daryl Zanuck remarked when he signed her to a twelve-year contract in 1945. The nickname stuck but the contract didn't because Russ met her on the 4th of July that year and signed her to a lifetime contract as Mrs. Russ Hayden a week later. Mousie ever since has held that position with charm, skill and the patience of a saint, as Russ willingly admitted.

Together this pair of authentic pioneers labored to preserve the natural beauty of the desert. You won't see any power lines messing up the sky over the Hayden ranch; they're all underground. Trails and developed areas for film making are almost invariably blended into the contours and vegetation of the land. Quietly, Russ and Mousie took a firm stand against developments and encroachments that might have blighted the desert scene, and worked always for preservation of its plant and animal life.

In that same interview with Allen, Russ revealed how Pioneertown got its name. "Bet you didn't know that we darn near named the place 'Rogersville' for Roy Rogers, but after some spirited discussion we named it Pioneertown in honor of the Sons of the Pioneers. That way no one man was getting top billing."

In 1956 his 16-year-old daughter, Sandra, the apple of his eye, was killed in an automobile accident. He and Mousie were devastated. Later, still grieving, they moved to Scottsdale, Ariz.

Back in November, 1950, Fletcher Jones and Bill Murphy, two Los Angeles automobile dealers and members of the corporation board of directors, bought the acreage and Mane Street property at an auction held at the north door of the San Bernardino County Courthouse. The price? \$80,000.

The people on Mane Street and surrounding roads still stuck to their guns. Cactus Kate, the resident clown and court jester, kept everyone's spirits up with her funny comedy routines and antics, some of which included her small grey horse, "Sox." Two of her most loyal fans were those Chinese Cowboys, Frank Gee and Henry Jew, owners of the Golden Stallion. They would wink and grin and snicker whenever Kate was "on" with her act.

There was another comedy act going on in the Golden Stallion. Frank Gee dearly loved to eat rattlesnake meat. He had all the schoolboys delivering the elongated entrees to him whenever they'd find one. Frank carefully inspected the snakes to make sure they had not struck themselves by accident. Then he would cook up a Rattlesnake Dinner just for himself. When the weekenders would come up for a famous Chinese dinner, the cafe regulars would warn them, "Watch out, when Frank runs out of chickens or road runners he uses rattlesnake." The tenderfoots would put down their forks and look around for signs of tall tales. Coming through the kitchen door, Frank would laugh the hardest.

Pioneertown First School Teachers: Mrs. Pearl Jones, Mrs. Clyde Biddle.

George & Pee Wee Toal opened the Frosted Pantry March 1948.



A little known fact is that Pioneertown was almost named Rogersville, after Roy Rogers. However, so that no one upstaged the spirit of the community, the town was named Pioneertown after the "Sons of the Pioneers," shown above. In the town's heyday, the Sons of the Pioneers were frequent visitors to the booming community bearing their name.

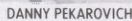
PIONEERTOWN Echoes From The Past

1949 County Road to Pioneertown improved; Trigger Bill & Johnnie Key did the blasting, cut some 40 odd feet off the big hill. Plan to have oiled next spring.

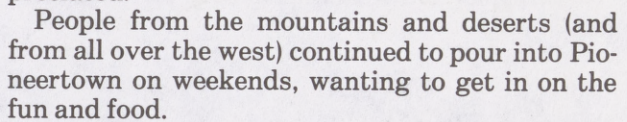
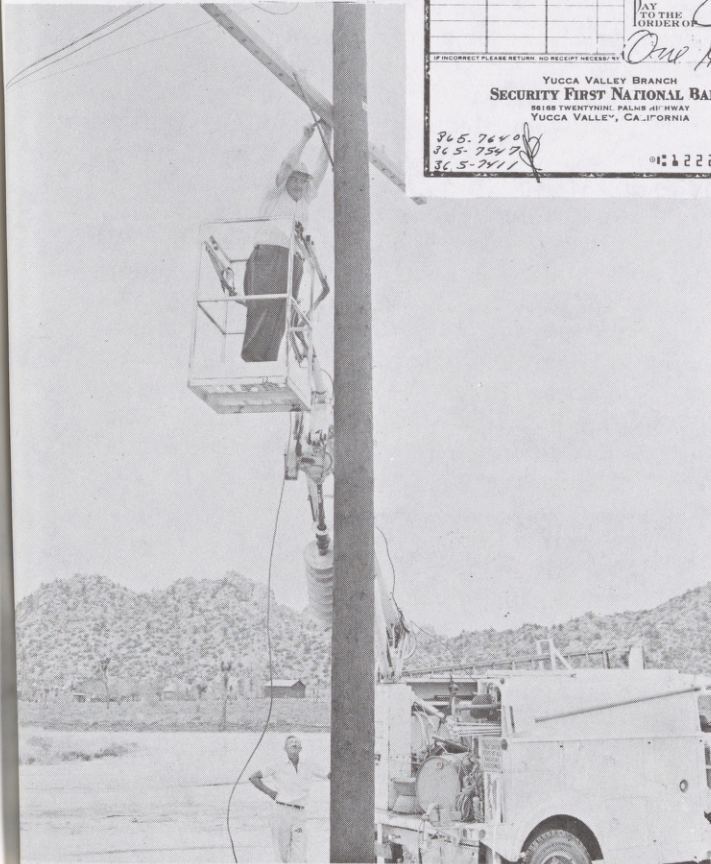
Pioneer Trailer Court
\$3.50 Weekly — Plus 50¢ electricity
opened Feb., 1948 — Robert Skare, owner.

1949 "Lights On" When the Corporation's diesel engine was on the fritz, Tommy Thompson tied in with the system and hooked it to his meter. Now California Electric Power Co. is supplying the juice for "Mane" St.

Trigger Bill opened April 3, 1948.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

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Right; Marie Amos, Publisher of "Jackass Mail." Below the office where the little yaller sheet was printed.

Maggie McDonald Rudrud





Melanson Family Photo

Above; the Golden Stallion, prior to the Easter Sunday fire. Below was the heart rending sight that greeted folks on Easter Sunday morning, 1966. At least a part of the heart of Pioneertown was gone.



Joan Wilson Photo

Below; left, at 3:00 A.M. Good Friday morning, 1966. The Red Dog Saloon burnt to the ground. The gloom that morning was evident. And; why not? The photo at right shows the interior of the Red Dog. A place of warmth and joy, was gone.

Joan Wilson Photo



In the mid-60's Benton Lefton and The Golden Empire purchased all the old corporation property and planned a huge subdivision. There were plenty of people interested, too, but the Empire ran into a snag — water. Mr. Lefton found that there is plenty of water running underground down the mountainsides and right under Pioneertown, but, because of rocks and boulders it will cost to drill to the water.

In 1966, Pioneertown and its friends all over the nation experienced the most heart-rending Easter weekend since the original one. At 3 a.m. on Good Friday the beloved Red Dog Saloon burned to the ground. At 3 a.m. on Easter Sunday morning the equally beloved Golden Stallion burned to the ground. On the scene, people were choked with body-shaking sobs and there were tears flowing all over the country as the news spread. No one was injured in the fires but the town's spirit, for a time, just plain died. The Red Dog was rebuilt in a more modest manner. And once again, the people stuck.

Russ and Mousie moved back and started the Sandra Hayden Memorial Foundation; Pappy and Harriet moved in and built the Pioneertown Palace; Allen Ward had his beautiful showplace home created, which was designed and built by Frank Garske.

Of major news and importance to everyone is that the Volunteer Fire Brigade has been enlarged and thoroughly trained and has one fire engine. There is also a one-engine unit of the California Dept. of Forestry under the command of Capt. Arn Hancock and Lt. Paul Ballard. The brigade's volunteers are John and Frances Aleba, Pappy Allen, Marie Ballard, Curt and Marie Bush, Leroy and Jane Card, Louis Conti, Bill and Sharon Dickenson, Lauren Dietz, Karen Goguen, Jim and Helen Hines, Marsha Hirsch, Press and Lila Horsey, Jerry Johnson, Howard and Nettie King, Joanne Kretschmer, Jerry Cross, W.B. Lavender, Michael and Beverly Murillo, Andrew and Anne Nelson, Eileen Rickets, George Wallace, Mary Waltz, Tom Wilkes, Ron and Gladys Young, Terry Remington and Constance Walsh.

Joan Wilson Photo



Of equal importance, a water entity has been established in Pioneertown. It is operated as a Service Area W-70 by San Bernardino County. There are more new houses and new people to join those hardy perennials.

And the leagues continue uninterrupted at the bowling alley.

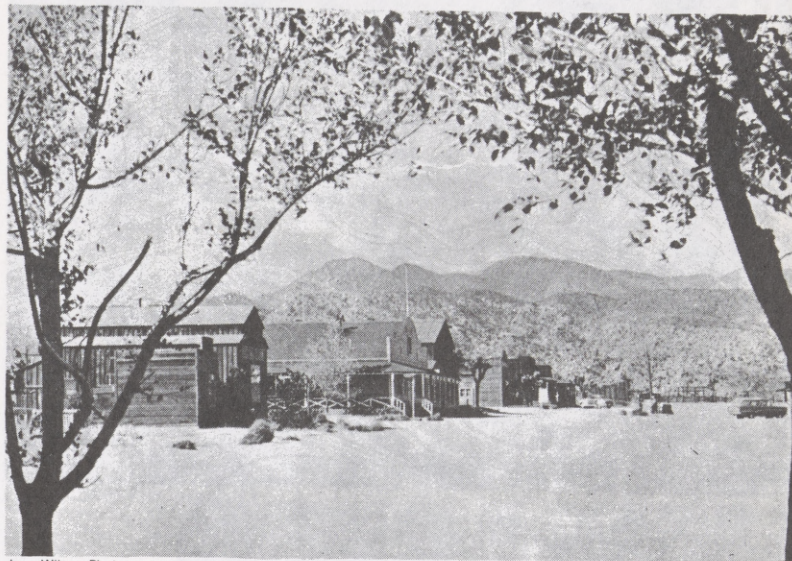
There are more new houses and people in Pipes Canyon, too. One of the most prestigious belongs to a celebrity and her husband who are dedicated to doing good deeds.

In 1980 famed singer Nancy Wilson and her husband, the Rev. Wiley Burton, purchased canyon property and built a beautiful 7,000 square foot home, complete with helipad. The following year they started the adjacent Coldwater Springs Campground, an outreach of the Nancy Wilson Foundation, which is the sole supporter of the camp. It plays host to about 1,500 youngsters each summer. The use of the camp is free as long as the groups are properly supervised. It has been used and enjoyed by the Boy and Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, Jr. Equestrians, church groups, underprivileged children, and mentally-retarded children's organizations. The camp is run by volunteer people. The first dormitory has just been completed for the ever-growing facility. Most of the roadwork and trails have been improved and the stables and corrals are up. Soon an additional dormitory will be built and a well will be dug.

The board of directors for the enterprise, all local residents, includes Ted and Mary Barr, Mary Glover, Betty Sartain, Mara and Julie Tunstall, Oden Wilson, Russ DiCarlo, Judy and Leo Gilhouse and Rev. Burton.

Other youth groups may participate each summer and may obtain further information by writing: The Nancy Wilson Foundation, P.O. Box 128, Pioneertown, CA 92286.

Near the eastern entrance to the canyon Ray and Billie Reynolds donated five acres of their property in 1978 and built a show corral for the use of ETI Corral 46, the Jr. Equestrians, the Sheriff's Mounted Posse and Search and Rescue Unit. The Reynolds were assisted by a bunch of equestrians-minded Marines. Unfortunately, it has never reached its full potential but it is the site of the annual John "Corky" Kee Memorial Horse Show. ●



Joan Wilson Photo



Al Lipps

Top Pioneertown as it appeared in 1949; a beautifully situated Western town. Above; in its boom days, Pioneertown Land Office was a very busy place, as shown in this 1947 photo. Below; long time resident, Maggie (McDonald) Rud Rud is shown with friend Jimmie Sterling. Below; Left, Ann Pekarovich and her mother in the 1948 Big Snow.

MAGGIE McDONALD RUDRUD



PEKAROVICH





Melanson Family Photo

A



Melanson Family Photo

PERSONALITIES

PIONEERTOWN Echoes From T



Melanson Family Photo

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Melanson Family Photo

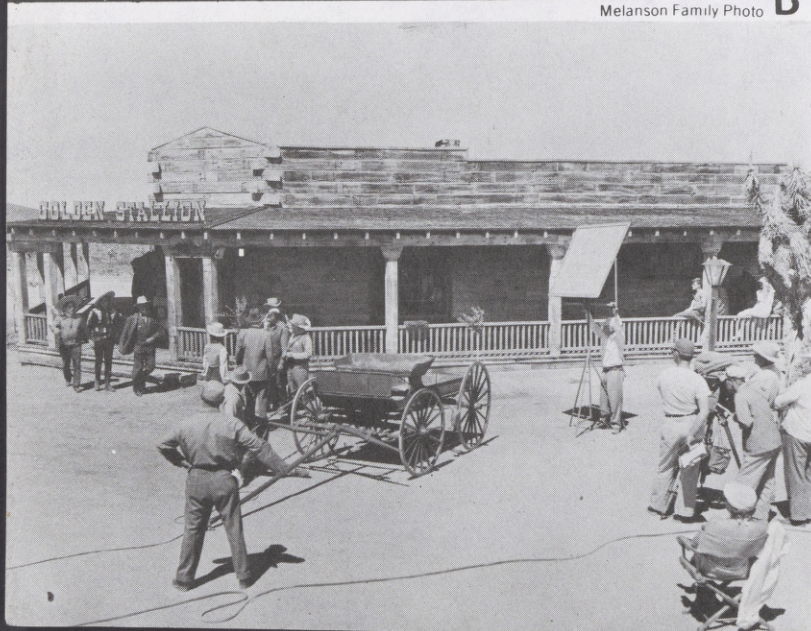
A. Marilyn Moon and Gene Autrey shooting a movie in Pioneertown in the late Forties. Their friend with the big ears, and white face is Champion, Gene Autrey's Horse.

B. A Golden Stallion gathering that might have been found almost any night. They are L. to R. Skipper White, Alice White, Marie Busch, Mona Ramsdale — (Gentleman's name unknown) Kathy Newton, Faye Moon, Lil Thompson — The names of the last two are, unknown.

C. Another "Golden Stallion" Function: The ladies in costume are L. to R. Ms. Walter Ramsdale, Kathy Newton and Honey Fellers.

D. Shooting the "Cisco Kid" on location at the Golden Stallion. Leo Carillo and Duncan Renaldo are seen on the left, coming out of the building. The cameras and crew are visible at right.

E. A typical "Red Dog" night — At left is Cactus Kate, A.K.A. Lil Thompson and Faye Moon being served by Val Jones. The lady in the background with glasses is Alice Creswell. Obviously, when Pioneertown was going strong, it was an active, fun place to be. A beautiful meal at the Golden Stallion, then off for an evening of fun at the Red Dog Saloon. Perhaps bowl a few lines at the Pioneer Bowl. Certainly, one need not have left the town to enjoy ones self; no matter what your tastes might have been.



Melanson Family Photo



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Melanson Family Photo

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Al Lipps

B

PIONEERTOWN From The Past

PERSONALITIES

There's no doubt that Pioneertown was a great place to have fun.

(a) The 1948 "Korny Karnival" produced this group of "Kan Kan" girls. L. to R. Jackie Bush, Candy Ammon, Patty Gathers, Frances Wiltse, Marilyn Moon and Joy Bush.

(b) Shorty Creswell rests after unloading, or perhaps, loading a lot of beer. Those who are familiar with Southern California recognize Acme Beer. It hasn't been brewed in at least twenty-five years.

(c) Three more members of the "Korny Karnival" cast. They are L. to R. Shorty Creswell, Pee Wee Toal and Julio Eisenbrook. Hardly three of a kind, except in their desire to have fun and spread joy.

(d) Taken inside the Pioneer Bowl — L. to R. Mr. & Mrs. Thompson, builders and first owners of Pioneer Bowl. In the center is Alice White, first Post Mistress of Pioneertown. At publication time the other figures in the photo could not be identified.

(e) A shot of the opening of Maggie's Feed Barn in 1947. Maggie (McDonald) Rud Rud is facing the camera. That opening produced a wonderful party in which over 250 Beef Sandwiches were consumed.

The people of Pioneertown took any; and all occasions to celebrate. Parties and gatherings were a way of life. It was a Happy town in its boom days, and there is every indication that the "Happy Days" are returning. Lets hope so. For no area is more conducive to a good time than Pioneertown.

Maggie McDonald Rudrud

E



C

MOUSIE HAYDEN

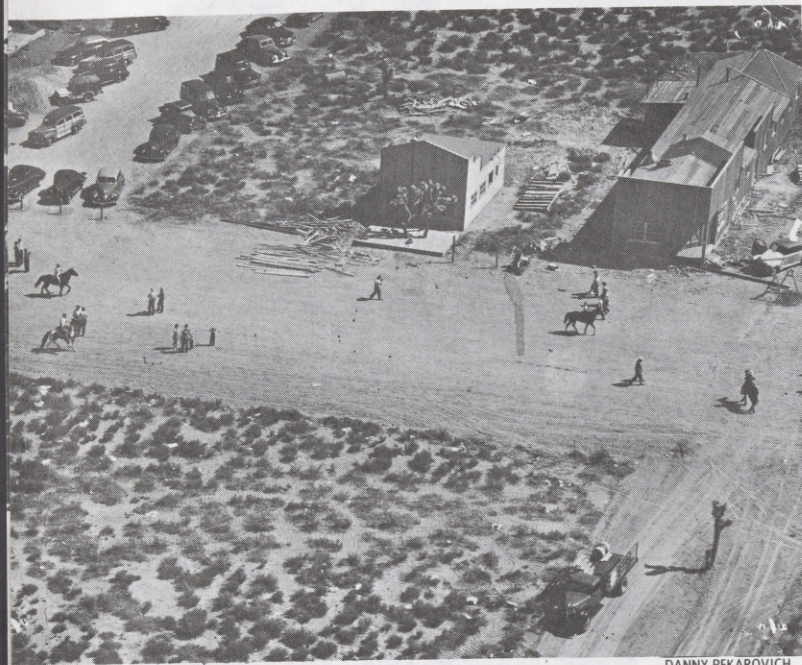
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DANNY PEKAROVICH



PIONEERTOWN

Echoes From The Past



DANNY PEKAROVICH

A

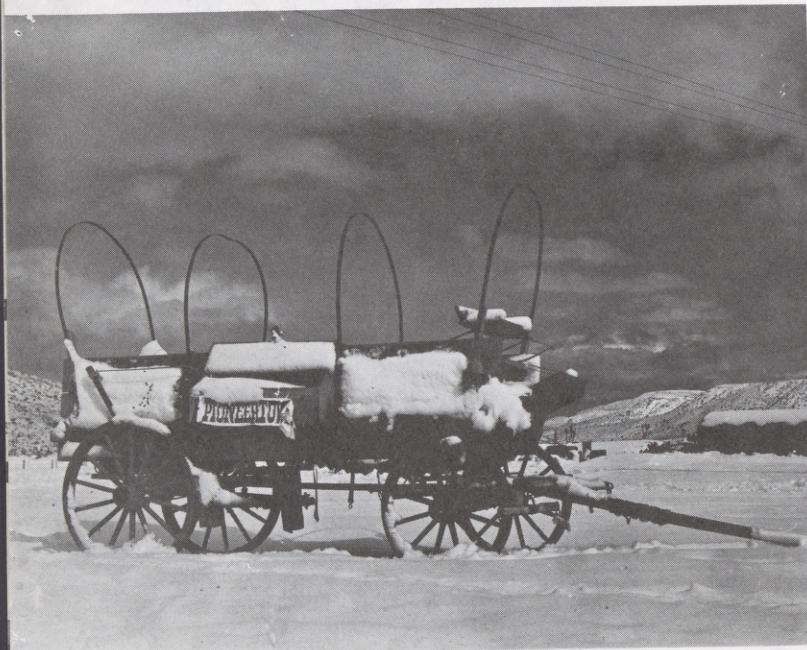
(A) A 1947 aerial view of Pioneer town under constructon. It was a busy place, full of promise.

(B) The winter of 1948 brought a lot of snow. The covered wagon show here was used by the Red Dog Saloon, as advertising.

(C) A typical 1948 view seen around Pi-Town. Wouldn't it be nice to see those times again.

(D) The 1948 winter brought many beautiful winter scenes. This one of Pioneer town, still under construction, tells a story of the problems experienced by these hearty Pioneers.

(E) The winter of 1949 brought a lot of additional snow. Notice the "Woodie" Station Wagons in front of the Pioneer town Gazette and the Grubstake Cafe. It's readily visible that Pioneer town was a unique area that abounded in beautiful views in all directions. To those who have never seen Pi-Town, take a short drive, just slightly north of Yucca Valley to the Hi-Desert Paradise that is Pioneer town.



DANNY PEKAROVICH

DANNY PEKAROVICH

B

DANNY PEKAROVICH

D



DANNY PEKAROVICH

E



C



PIONEERTOWN

Echoes From The Past

(A) During the growing years of Pioneertown tourist groups such as this one were constant through every weekend. A lot of Real Estate was sold to people who are still residents of Pi-Town.

(B) This shot of the 1948 winter in Pioneertown is self explanatory. If you can't see beauty in this shot — you're just not looking.

(C) One of the countless movies being shot in Pioneertown. You might see one almost any night on the late show.

(D) A view of the townhouse in the 1948 snowy winter. The sky indicates that more snow was on the way when this shot was taken.

(E) If this shot were taken about a century ago, one might look for the gallows for a public hanging would certainly draw a crowd such as this one. Truthfully, we're not sure whether this crowd is a bunch of extras in a movie, or a group of eager land investors looking to get in on the ground floor of Pioneertown.



A

DANNY PEKAROVICH

D DANNY PEKAROVICH



B



DANNY PEKAROVICH

Margie Hamilton

E DANNY PEKAROVICH



C



PIONEERTOWN

Echoes From The Past

Desert Views Newspaper printed for Pioneertown Grand opening, Aug. 28, 1946.

"A Free Newspaper, For A Free People in A Free Country."

One of the first to operate in Pioneertown was the Chuck Wagon, opened by Marie Bush & Toodles Senn.

First Mass conducted outdoors with a covered wagon serving as an altar. Father John L. Lima M.M. Father Lima was from New Bedford Mass., and a friend of the Dick Curtis.

Feb. 22, 1948

29 children are attending school in Pioneertown — Mrs. Biddle is the school teacher.

1948 Al Lipps, president of the business men's group.

Pioneer Townhouse Rates \$6.00 doubles \$8.00 Three adults — Mgr. Mrs. Marvel Lind.

Aug. 28/48: Thrifty Drug Co. of Los Angeles went Pioneer in a big way during its "Pioneer Day Sale" with a prize 1¼ acre ranch site in town as first prize. Another prize all expense paid weekend for 8 persons in Pioneertown. More than a half million copies of Thriftys Pioneer Days shopping news were printed.

John Kee was school president of Pioneertown school building board — Aug. 28, 1948.

1948 — Feb. Dr. R.E. Guenther D.C. Temporary office in Klip 'N Kurl.

Oct. 30 — 1948 Diversion Dam — A diversion dam in Burns Canyon to store and supply water for Rimrock is one of the new projects being undertaken by Pioneertown. The \$18,000 project is slated to start soon and will be engineered by Ralph O'Neil of Glendale.

Jack Price built the Pioneertown Rodeo Grounds for the horses.

Likker Barn purchased by Mrs. Katherine Newton from Mrs. Pearl Seidl 1948.

1948 Pioneertown Gazette distributed 15,000 copies of the Pictorial edition at the Los Angeles County Fair at Pomona.

Rimrock Motel Turns on "Juice" said Mr. & Mrs. Dan Peckarovich 1948.

Electric was turned on in Pioneertown 1949.

Feb. 27, 1949 — 3,000,000 copies of the song "Out In Pioneertown have been pressed by recording manufacturers.

Oct. 12 — 1961

First Telephone — Hester Guinan, postmaster at Pioneertown to receive a telephone. First of 23 scheduled. First call by Hester? To Hilda Hardesty, Postmaster in Yucca Valley of course!

Feb. 27 — 1949

Pioneertown Cited as Birthplace of New Coffee Vending Machine.

Coffee — Teria — non electric liquid coffee vending machine dispenses a freshly brewed cup of Maxwell House coffee with pure fresh cream and cubed sugar for those desiring it. Coin operated, 10¢ a cup.

A number of Pioneertown property owners a stockholders in the Browden Corp.

Feb. 27 — 1949 — Mary Ann Pekarovich a senior at 29 Palm High School was crowned Miss 29 Palms, she will represent us at the National Orange Show. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Pekarovich of the Rimrock Motel.

Feb. 27 — 1949

Stork Delivers Little Cowboy

Little 7 pound, 5 oz. "Danny Boy" to Daniel & Dorothy Sall at Thos. H. Ince Memorial Hospital in 29 Palms on Feb. 18, 1949. Danny is being acclaimed the first baby in Pioneertown.

The first sign for Pioneertown read: "Live Here and Live Longer (1948).

Golden Stallion Grand Opening, April 16, 1948.

First Edition of the Pioneertown Gazette, August 18, 1947 — Price: one ounce of Gold Dust or 5 cents U.S. Gov't Money.

July 4, 1948 Jane Russell was at the horse show and the side show.

March 1948 Beverly Moninger "Queen of Pioneertown" will ride in the Circus Parade in Palm Springs.

This is the story of Henry C. Jew and Frankie Gee, a couple of Chinese boys who took Horace Greeley's advice a little late, but went West just the same!

Tired of crowded city streets and fed up with jam-packed busses and street cars, they packed their belongings and headed for the wide open spaces.

Avid Western movie fans, they had decided that in not one of the hundreds of Western pictures they had seen was there any evidence of a Chop Suey emporium. Somehow their canny countrymen had overlooked a bet.

The more they pondered the matter, the more they became convinced that they should do something about it. They would introduce the joys of Chow Mein to "Nature's noblemen."

The boys had noticed that chuck wagon chow, as seen on the screen, looked rather uninviting. (Prop men on Westerns have a larger budget for blank shells than for prop food.) It seemed only logical that hard-riding out-of-doors men should have healthy appetites that would welcome a change to pork noodles and such.

First, came the matter of location. This problem was solved by a radio commercial. A new real estate development, sponsored by a group of movie folks, was being opened on the California desert. The fronts of all houses constructed in the main village were required to be of period western design. This made them ideal movie fronts as locations for Western pictures.

Stars and directors owning vacation hideaways in the nearby hills and canyons could shoot Western scenes in the little town all day and yet be close to their modern desert cabins at the end of a day's work. Desert tans could be acquired between retakes and Horse Operas could be made far from the nemesis of all sound movies — the noise of passing airplanes.

To a pair of Chinese-American boys, who spent most of their spare time watching two-gun heroes on the screen, the radio commercial sounded like an invitation to paradise.

Purchasing Western outfits, complete with ten-gallon hats and boots, the boys took off for Pioneertown in the Yucca Valley.

A perfect location was right at the end of the "Western Street." Any sales resistance vanished when the shrewd real estate dealer, who had them in tow, suddenly produced two very gentle riding horses.

It was probably the first time in history that two saddle horses ever sold a parcel of real estate to a couple of Chinese, would-be cowboys. To cinch the deal a Western troupe happened to arrive the same day and started "shooting" on the street. That did it! The star turned out to be one



Witting Collection



Melanson Family Photo

Pioneertown's "Chinese Cowboys" Frank Gee on the left and Henry Jew at right. They built and operated the great "Golden Stallion Restaurant" in the early years.

of their favorites and the boys had visions of serving large portions of Egg Foo Yung to famous buckaroos.

In a short time those dreams came true — or partly so. (Many of the local cowboys still regard Chinese food with a wary eye.) Today, in Pioneertown, a large, well-equipped restaurant stands at the end of the village street. The interior is in modern Western motif, but for movie purposes the outside conforms to the prevailing old-west style of architecture.

Inside the spacious structure Henry Jew and Frankie Gee beam welcomes to patrons from beneath wide-brimmed hats. When they greet customers with a hearty "Howdy partner!," they make up in geniality what they lack in Western accent.

Chinese foods had to be supplemented with steaks and chops and the huge Chop Suey sign they dreamed of was cancelled to keep their exterior strictly Western, but the boys are happy.

If, by any chance, you ever visit Pioneertown, you'll find two beaming Oriental-Americans, booted, spurred, and wearing shirts that would put a Western sunset to shame. They'll be presiding over a Chinese Chop Suey Palace, named of all things "The Golden Stallion"!

Reprinted from Pioneertown Gazette, 1949.

SANDRA HAYDEN FOUNDATION



hen the Haydens moved to Scottsdale, Ariz., following the death of their 16-year-old daughter, Sandra, tragically killed in an automobile accident in 1956, they were still deeply saddened. His actress wife, Mousie, described his despair. "Russell was in a grievous state," she said. "He couldn't go back to Pioneertown for a long time."

Hayden himself said, "At first I was so bitter that I lost all heart for everything that I had ever worked or lived for. We had been shooting films here at the ranch in those days, you know. Sandy, as young as she was, had become a real help as a prompter and dialogue director, working with such well known actors as Duncan Renaldo and Leo Carrillo. We all looked forward to a great life for her, but when she went out of it, it just didn't seem to be a great life for us anymore." While in Scottsdale he built another western town and produced *The Twenty-six Men* television series.

As the Haydens were preparing the first arrangements for the foundation they told some of the local people and their old friends from the film days of their feelings. "Of course," Russ continued, "that was a long time ago; wounds heal and things change, but you just can't forget. Lately we've been thinking about doing something worthwhile in remembering Sandy—her cheerfulness and her love for everybody. We know that she would like to cheer and help others if she could, and the memorial fund seemed to be a way to make that possible. I know that just getting it started has cheered us up and given us something new to work for."

When they heard that Karen "PeeWee", youngest daughter of his old Yucca Valley and Pioneertown friends, Danny and Anne Pekarovich, had lost a leg to cancer with more expensive treatment to come an idea started forming. Karen's sunny disposition and happy optimism shown toward everyone she knew reminded Hayden of his daughter. He thought the possibilities through and decided to establish the Sandra Hayden Memorial Foundation and to hold a benefit barbecue once a year around the 4th of July to raise funds for community people who had catastrophic illnesses or accidents. PeeWee was the recipient of that first barbecue. The high desert citizenry responded with open hearts. She was presented with a check for \$5,190, the net proceeds for the benefit.



John Arch and Russ Hayden in the period prior to the Sandra Hayden Memorial.

In preparation for the special event, Russ and Mousie wrote to all of their old movie friends, told them of the plans, asked if they would buy tickets to the barbecue and if they would not send a personal memento that could be auctioned off at the affair. The response was wonderful and, in accompanying letters each one spoke touchingly of how Sandy would have loved and approved of the foundation and the goal of helping someone out of trouble just when they need the help and the boost to their morale the most.

That first year (1977) Barbara Hardesty was the president of the foundation board. Board members who made up the first advisory/selection committee were Dr. and Mrs. John Bendall, Allen Ward, Lina B. McFarland, Thelma Stockman, Tom and Laura Riggs, Gene and Barbara Hardesty and George and Agnes McBride.

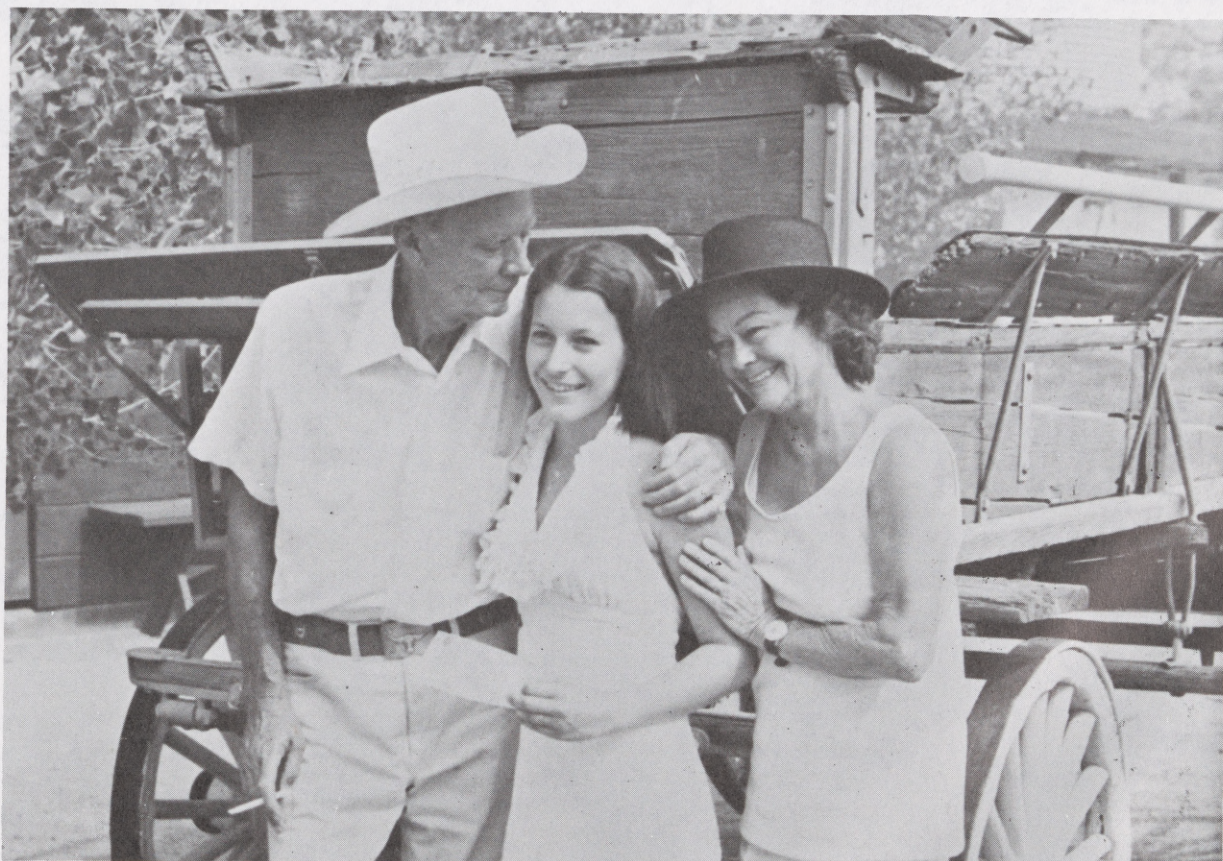
Other board presidents, some of whom have served more than once, are Glenn Harper, Danny Pekarovich, Allen Ward, Russ Hayden, Tom Hampton and, for the year 1984-85, Tom Riggs is the president.

Among the board members and/or Trustees are: Roger and Betty Lawson, Carol Britt, John Kaupp, Mollie Graham, Wally Orum, Ray Liebengood, Laura Riggs, George and Agnes McBride, Kathleen Jorgenson, Phil and Lorraine Bakke, Arlene Bobier, Betty-Tom-Sara Faye Hampton, Roger Melanson, Annie Pekarovich, Vernice Porter, Thelma Stockman, Marjorie Sollecito, Michelle Ward, Bob and June Meyer, Jim and Paulette Clark, Gayle Anderson, Cliff and Patty Bradshaw, Brian Brophy, John and Lila Cuddy, Joe and Corene Hammett, Neda Harper, Chuck and Patricia Kaupp, John and Marian List, Stony and Betty Loft, Gary McAllen, Frank and Lupe McDonald, Jeanne Warburton, George Bryant, Harry Harper and PeeWee (Mousie's sister). Mousie herself has always been the board secretary.

Among the hundreds of local, California and out-of-state organizations, businesses and individuals that have made such marvelous contributions of money, merchandise, time and efforts.

After Karen, the other gravely ill people who were selected are: Lloyd Vaughn Smith, a 10-year-old boy in a coma after being run down by a motorcycle; Joe Noone and Paul McCormick, two Joshua Tree men who had serious heart attacks; Billy Royal, of Yucca Valley, who had a series of serious operations (when he lost heart in the midst of those operations, who was it that went into his room and gave him a good talking to? Why, of course, it was Karen.); Doreen Kelly, a Yucca Valley Elementary School student with leukemia; Vicki Wilson, a mother of three children, who had cancer of the larynx; "Dazzlin' Dallas Morley, the Pioneertown entertainer who also had a series of three serious operations; David Henry, a young Yucca Valley father of two boys who was a cancer victim; and John Cirio, a kidney disease victim. He was a former Marine in Vietnam where he was exposed to Agent Orange. It was this last recipient who set a special record by breaking all attendance records for the barbecue — well over 3,500 people attended; and also broke the profits record when he got a check for \$6,247.87.

Left to Right; Russ "Lucky" Hayden, Karen "Pee Wee" Pekarovich, and Mousie Hayden. Karen was the first recipient of an award from the Sandra Hayden Memorial Foundation. Since the first award in 1977, an award is made to a deserving person, each year.



MOUSIE HAYDEN

The foundation has also contributed to the Pioneertown Volunteer Fire Brigade Building Fund and to the Morongo Basin Eagles, a group serving mentally retarded children and the local coordinator for the Special Olympics.

Russ devoted the last years of his life to the foundation and to helping others in need. He died of pneumonia on June 9, 1981, one day before his 70th birthday. But Mousie and the other board members are determined that the good work will go on long after all of them are gone and replaced by other volunteers eager to do their share.

As the years have passed the foundation, the barbecue and the whole operation are acknowledged to be the best organized, most smoothly working outfit anywhere around. They should package their know-how and enthusiasm!

Among the celebrities who have been in attendance through the years are Jackie Coogan,

Will Sampson, John Warburton, Sunset Carson, Jimmy Wakely (from the western film days), Jan Clayton, Mrs. Hoot Gibson and Mrs. Bob Nolan. Also, every year actress Lynn Carver can be counted on to bring a busload of her friends with her.

Also through the years the crowd pleaser attractions have been (besides the delicious barbecue, the bar and drink stands and the mid-way booths) art auctions, outdoor art exhibits, Hole In One Golf contests, memorabilia and merchandise auctions (with Don and Mary Townsend as the tremendous auctioneers) and tours of The Scarlet Lady luxurious railroad car, wagon rides and music, music, music.

Entertainers have included Doug McGinnis, The Wave Trio, Sunset, Jeff and Mike Heil, Jim Rauch, Louis Nardoni, John Sedia, Pappy and Harriet, Big Arthur Bernhardt, Bruce Hampton,

Each year the Sandra Hayden Memorial Fund has a Fourth of July Barbecue. As this photograph attests, the crowds are large, and the mood is joyous. Each year the crowd grows and the event just gets better. It all helps the Foundation in presenting sizeable checks to worthy recipients.

MOUSIE HAYDEN



Dallas Morley (before she became too ill to participate), The Powell Family Singers, Donald Scott, Bobby of Burnt Mountain, The Four Wheel Drive and Heluvabash musical groups, The Bravados western stunt act, the Yucca Valley High School Drill Team, the 25-piece community band conducted in different years by George Reed, Jim Berg, Warren Rutherford and Patrick Kercheval; guitarist Bobby Moreno, the Country Conspiracy, Four-Ever Yours, Runnin' Iron Western Players, Sagebrush, Swinging Jazzmen Dixieland Band, Eddie Rosco & Jackueline Armitage, the Threshold Sky Diving Team, the U.S. Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Band and the American Legion Band.

All for such wonderful causes — and with Sandy and Russ looking down and enjoying it just as much as all of the joyful spectators.

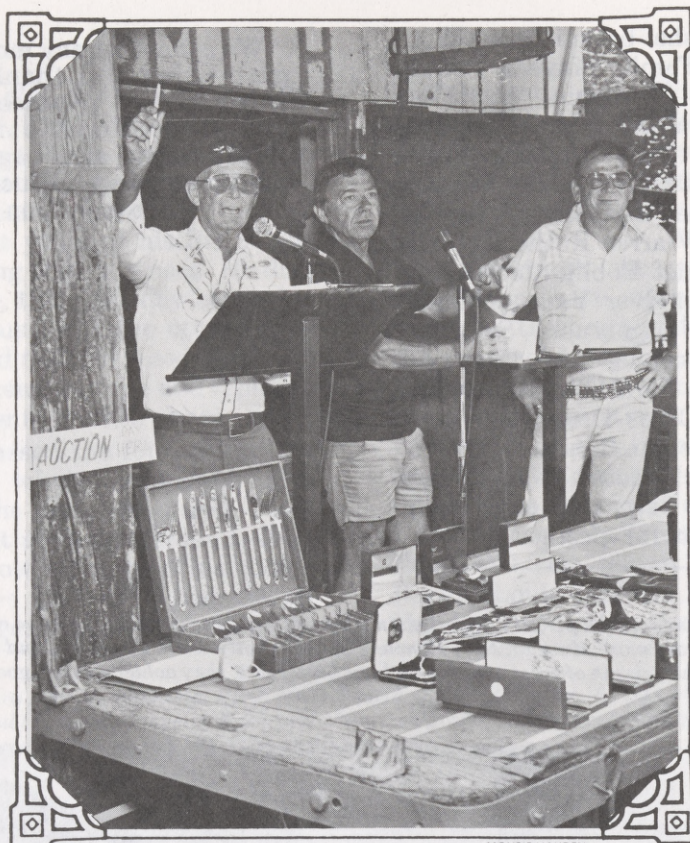
We cannot let any more time go by without congratulating and thanking Mousie and all the members and volunteers of the Sandra Hayden Memorial Foundation for their superior achievements and magnificently organized fund-raising barbecues. Muchas Gracias!

Joan Wilson and Pat Helm

Mousie Hayden standing by a period Lamp Post in front of "The Scarlet Lady." As one can see, the grounds of the Hayden Ranch are more Museum than Ranch. That is exactly what both Russ and Mousie Hayden were aiming for; and in the opinion of most people who have been there, they achieved their goal.

MOUSIE HAYDEN





MOUSIE HAYDEN

The Sandra Hayden Memorial Fund is supported by the auction above, and by the people having a sumptuous Barbecue meal. It all goes to support the Foundation's grants.



MOUSIE HAYDEN



Joan Wilson

Rose Mine



he Old Rose Mine, along the Pioneer Pass Road to Big Bear Valley, was one of the largest producing gold mines in the San Bernardino Mountains. Discovered during the early 1880's, and named for its outcroppings of rose quartz, it was worked first by the original owners, then sold to a Chicago syndicate, which expanded operations, and built a new mill (the ruins of this mill can be seen in the above photo). Water flooding the shafts, and other misfortunes, finally brought about the closing of the mine, seemingly with a fortune in untapped gold veins still intact.

The photo above was made in 1948 when the old mill and other buildings were still standing. The site has since been stripped of everything removable. In 1959, the shafts were filled in to prevent possible accident.



s this book goes to press it was announced by Mousie Hayden that the Hayden Ranch has been put up for sale. In addition, she indicated that the Sandra Hayden Memorial Foundation was being dissolved. Ironically, the last, and final barbecue raised the largest amount of money of any of the annual efforts.

Thank You



n offering thanks to the many people who have given their help, we are always in danger of inadvertent error or omission. We hope this won't happen, but should we omit important names we offer our apology.

To those businesses, on subsequent pages who helped to sponsor this publication we are grateful, and hope that Readers of this volume will give them their support. Finally we want to pay

particular thanks to those people who worked tirelessly in searching out photos and furnishing them to this Publication. They deserve credit for their work and their dedication to the Yucca Valley area and Pioneertown. To all we offer our heartfelt thanks for sharing their Photographs and their memories. Without your help and dedication, this volume would not have been possible.

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Marge Hamilton

This Volume can be obtained from
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Dauids Store for Men & Boys
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Yucca Valley Liquors — Corine Hammett

Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce
Norge Village
Carolynne Hansen
C & S Cafe

The original book "The Heritage of Yucca Valley" is also available at the same locations.



A. Silver Photo

“The Desert’s Ten Commandments”

ONE

Thou shalt love the Desert, but not lose patience with those who say it’s bleak and ornery (even when the wind is blowing).

TWO

Thou shalt speak of the Desert with great reverence, and lie about it with great showmanship, adding zest to tall tales and legends.

THREE

Thou shalt not admit other Deserts have more color than the one on which you have staked your claim.

FOUR

Thou shalt on the Sabbath look to the mountain peaks so’s to know better your whereabouts, so’s you can help others to know the Desert, dotting on the map the places where you have camped.

FIVE

Honor the Pioneers, Explorers and Desert Rats who found and marked the water holes; and stop shooting the road signs full of holes — they tell you about the next water hole and try to help you live in the Desert.

SIX

Thou shalt not shoot the antelope chipmunk, kangaroo rat or other harmless Desert friends.

SEVEN

Thou shalt not adulterate the water holes nor leave the campsite messed up. Be sure to take 10 gallons of water with you. Don’t have to ask the other fellow on the road for a quart, but be able to help the tenderfoot by giving him some water.

EIGHT

Thou shalt not steal (from the prospectors shack), nor forget to fill the wood box and water pail.

NINE

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor; you know the minin laws; you know the whereabouts of his monuments.

TEN

Thy shalt not covet thy neighbor’s sleeping bag, his gun nor the contents of his canteen.

(Pioneertown Gazette by an unknown writer)

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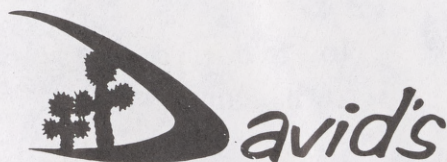
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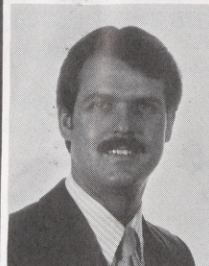
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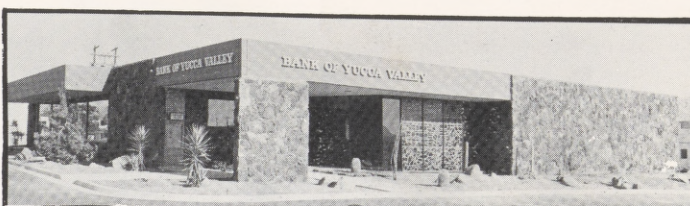
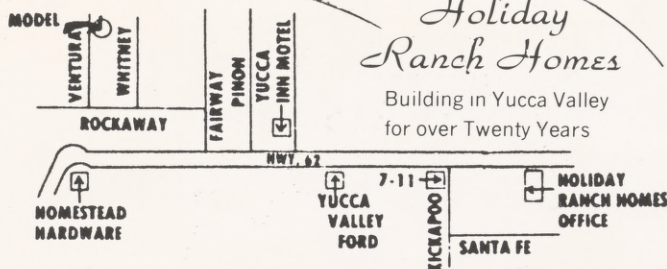
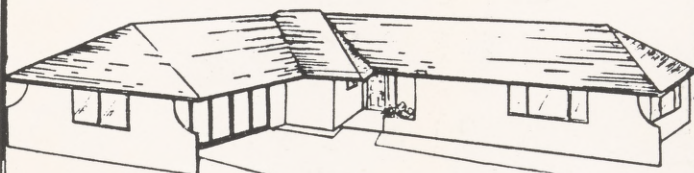
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